The Urban Saint in Early Byzantine Social History

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CONTENTS

Page

PART I MEN, WOMEN AND SOCIETY

Introduction 1

Chapter I: Men and Society 11

Method — Marriage and Family
Career and Society — Summary

Chapter II: Position of Byzantine Women 26

Method — Advantages and Disadvantages
Family and Household — Social Activities and Shame
Career Women — Summary

PART II SOCIETY AND THE SAINT

Introduction — Saints active within the Society

Chapter III: Saints and Individuals 41

Tactics in encounters — evidence
Friendly and Hostile meetings — method
First and Second Groups of Cities
The Saint as an Individual — summary

Chapter IV: Saints and Institutions 59

Section A: Secular Institutions
method - evidence - state
social groups - professional groups summary

Section B: Ecclesiastic Institutions 69
method - personal, physical, spiritual matters
evidence: relations with church and churchmen
the saint as an institution
summary

Chapter V: Physical Illness and the healing of the soul — Methods of divine medicine 81

Introduction
Hypotheses and analysis of evidence — method, illnesses

Page

Cures: surgery to exorcism - the process of healing
Social implications — summary

Chapter VI: Conclusions: The Saint and Civic Unity 103

Method: Summary and points arising
Evidence — Interpretation
Possible further investigations
The decline of the Urban Saint

INTRODUCTION

The Saints of the Eastern Empire should not be confused with West European counterparts. They had more in common with the guru or holy man of Asia than the martyr or knight saints of the Western World. It is the premise of this work that there was also a recognisable division in role between saints leading the life of a desert hermit and those in or near cities with cult sites accommodating pilgrims and disciples. For these latter I have created the label The Urban Saints. These Urban Saints have too often been swept together with their rural and peripatetic counterparts or have been accepted without realisation of, or attempt to note, the differences.

It is here contended that they are an entity apart and that basic questions must be asked which have not been examined before:

Why were they there? — Why prominent at that time?
What did they do?
What part did saint and City play in each other's lives?

Works on Byzantine Social History, particularly of the early period, are at the best, very few and far between. This gave rise to two elements: one of purpose, one of method. Firstly it made it possible if not probable that a study of the simple questions alone and of the matters they imply might reveal important Features and links in our understanding of Byzantine Society.

Secondly it meant that I had to lean quite heavily on modern works of sociology and anthropology of the Mediterranean area. They provided triggers; their particular fusion of this with the available material is the outcome of the author's own interests. In addition peripheral information from medical and other spheres has been employed.

Apart from these "props" the organisation is the author's and there must rest the blame for any idiosyncratic emphases.

Starting from a couple of the major sources and some of the secondary stimuli, further reading served only to reinforce the original ideas with which the Study was begun and helped to build the framework used here.

Before investigating the connections of Saint and Urban Society we should look critically at hagiography as a source of evidence. In a culture which reveals itself to the modern reader mainly through political and legal treatises, hagiography is often the only written evidence for social study. Inscriptions and epitaphs supplement knowledge but cannot give the same coverage. But the aims and allegiances of hagiographies must always be taken into account and can colour the material considerably. Yet, a great deal of invaluable information which is to be gained nowhere else, is given away freely with great precision and requires no careful decoding.

Hagiography was also a recognised literary genre with its set panegyric patterns and modes of expression. This too can be a pitfall for the unwary, but can also be a positive aid to those alive to its motives and format.

One further cautionary point to be tackled at this stage concerns the question of believing in hagiography. This is perhaps the most vulnerable meeting point between Byzantine subjects and modern readers. It should not, however, be regarded as a great stumbling block of invalidation. Clearly, not all details of hagiography can be swallowed as fact. These are stylised anecdotes, sometimes reappearing in several of the sources; many of the miracles are either explicable or incredible to the modern reader. Nevertheless hagiography reflects very reliably how Byzantine Society thought of itself and of its worldly surroundings. Having set out to observe exactly that, we may question and compare, but not dismiss the information that the sources give. In this sense the evidence used, despite its selectivity provides a truer picture than any attempt at a "scientific" examination which would belittle and misunderstand the subject from the outset.

* * * * *

The period under study, roughly the last half of the fifth century to the first third of the seventh, has long been considered the Golden Age of early Byzantine achievement. Cities and Saints were both numerous and thriving in an Empire with central pax on a Roman model and expanding frontiers. This background is relevant to any examination of related roles of Saint and Society.

The choice of sources was dictated by the need for a reasonable sized sample with some homogeneity of time and place and also providing a range of size of cities.

The changes and establishment of Empire during the sixth century, as one might expect, do render the society and attitudes of the late fifth century very different from what is found at the later end of the time spectrum. The length of the period and coverage given in the sources does, however, support interesting comparisons within these limits.

Geographic homogeneity is achieved by a concentration on cities of the eastern Mediterranean sea-board as cities to the West of Constantinople had very different problems to face in their terrain, fertility of their hinterland, climate, communications and defence.

The cities chosen range in size from the giant cosmopolis of Constantinople already approaching three quarters of a million in population, through other cities of importance in commerce, administration and tradition, to Sykeon, a modest town with little other claim to fame than its saint.

* * * * *

The purpose of this work is to establish that the place of the urban saint was firmly integrated with the fortunes of his urban society. In order to do this, the activities of the saints are examined along with the communities' responses to them, the motives for an results of the relationship on both sides. An attempt is made to banish the prevailing vague picture of assorted ethereal holy figures wandering in the wilderness fulfilling only their own ascetic vocation. Instead, the picture to be painted is one of the urban saint as a very positive force in the life of his chosen centre and indeed as instrumental in its continuity and survival.

The study is divided into two independent but interconnected sections. The first consists of two chapters establishing the detailed make-up of the urban society which is under consideration on a more general basis. The elements to be considered in relation to saints and hagiography are then isolated before probing the connections. Both saint and hagiographer were, after all, products of this same society.

In other words, using the same material sources as Section II, section I sets out to investigate and put forward an impression of the Society. Surprisingly little is known or written about the most basic aspects of Byzantine Society. Of both Roman and Greek precursors we know far more, but as yet this corner of the Byzantine panoply has not been reached or made respectable.

The evidence for family life and the social position of women in particular but also of men, is diverse and not easily accessible. Hagiography is, as already admitted, a biased source of information, it is also incomplete. Yet it is the most reliable information we have and accords well with the later anthropological and sociological material now available. Some such material finds its way into the first section of this work and, it is hoped, can help in understanding the significant details of Section II.

The second section examines the various saints and communities along the lines suggested by material used for the Saints' encounters with people, their most basic and valuable activity, provide the bulk of the raw material.

These people can be called clients, seeking aid of various kinds, and opponents. The hypothesis followed is that both clients and opponents fell into two distinct types when treated by the hagiographer. As a filter and designer, the hagiographer deliberately chose some to be treated as individuals and some others as representatives of a group or institution. The material is analysed from this premise to illuminate the implications and significance of this system.

The topic of divine medicine is treated in relation to this central theme. As the saints' chief specific activity, it casts further light on the mainstream of the argument as well as supplying a great deal of extra detail of independent interest.

The function of the hagiographer was complex. The reader's suspicion should however, be tempered by the following considerations: he was often the personal disciple and contemporary of the saint whose life he undertook, as a holy and vital duty, to relate to the world. If his memory reached back through the career of the saint, so did that of many others. He could not

afford to contradict the knowledge of his audience nor to overstretch their credulity. The treatment of material was therefore, in a sense, moderated. It was also governed by traditional literary and ideological modes of content and form. The fame of a saint was also a useful weapon in the marginal economy of the city and its surrounding area. News and pilgrims travelled surprisingly efficiently and extensively. The hagiographer's awareness of these burdens of the capacities of his audience is well demonstrated by the sources themselves. The devices of manipulation and subtle influence played upon the audience are apparent to the modern reader but would not have diminished their contemporary effectiveness.

The extent to which these lives of saints would have been read or heard recited should not be overlooked. They vary enormously in their employment of rhetorical and other literary or semantic pressures on the audience. In the more crowded narrative lives, the hagiographers, for example of Symeon and of the healing saints, are content to let the deeds tell their own story while the rhetorical underlining is limited to the occasional refrain. On the one hand these authors might be thought the most reliable because they are the least interpretative. On the other hand, the healing saints, like S. Thecla, were "dead" saints and so offered extra scope for manipulation. In the case of Ss. Cosmas and Damian an extra threat to continuity and reliability is posed by the fact that the tale is related by several authors and extends in time far later than the stated limits of this study. These facts in themselves however, add an interesting dimension for comparison and insight.

The miracles of S. Thecla are perhaps the most obvious case of author-interference. The difficulties of Bishop Basil and his aims stand out very clearly in the text and add human interest. They are discussed elsewhere and need not be dwelt upon here.

Another element which aids the reader to differentiate the characteristic traits of the sources and indeed, to gauge its audience, is the text's closeness to set hagiographic (panegyric) formulae. The meticulousness of style—or lack of it is as good a way as any of ascertaining the literary and classical accomplishments of the author and the likely level of his receptive audience. This is not a major issue of this study but it may be worth recording at this stage that good style seems more dependent upon the time than upon the place in which it was written.

Bishops were clearly more highly educated in literary matters than simple monks and disciples.

The panegyric format demanded details of the Saints' parentage, early upbringing and youthful indications of prodigious powers. The emphasis on this varies enormously; the hagiographers of the healing saints confining themselves to miracles alone. Symeon's training and progress through monastic disciplines are related in enormous detail; the corresponding phases in the lives of S. Daniel and S. Theodore are more evenly balanced by accounts of their childhood both normal and extraordinary.

In all cases, the narrative of miracles outweighs these primary considerations. In some cases, notably those of S. Symeon, S. Nikolas, and S. Daniel, this is interspersed with references to a growing number of disciples

and buildings on site. The biographies of S. Daniel and of S. Theodore also pay great attention to the saints' death and the ritual of the occasion, and miracles ensuing thereafter. Beyond this brief idea of emphasis, the texts must speak for themselves.

Before embarking on the main body of the work, a survey of the sources giving an idea of locations in time and geography now seems appropriate.

Attached to Constantinople we have three sources. The earliest one is the life of S. Daniel. The text is most easily accessible in translation by Dawes and Baynes. It covers the last half of the fifth century referring to the great fire of the city in 456 and conquests of Basilicos against the vandals. The date of the saint's death is given as 493 A.D.

The Saint's pillar site, established after considerable opposition from demons and more tangible obstacles, was at some distance from the city. It was close enough for frequent visits from courtiers and others whose occupations kept them busily employed in the city and its environs — it was also far enough away to be a gathering point for landowners and humbler country dwellers as well as travellers. Another practical reason for absence from the city was the absence of bureaucratic interference, while at the same time providing a focal point for the saint as protector and overseer of the City's destiny — from outside.

Certainly the destiny of Constantinople required such care. Still officially Latin speaking and writing, still very close to the idea of itself as Rome in continuation, the city was expanding rapidly towards its early peak. This would be reached in the half century after the building of Justinian's monument to the Holy Wisdom. At this stage it did not dominate the skyline. The city was then, as now, the meeting place of continents, seas, trade routes and the scene of all political, diplomatic, and commercial activity. It already far outstripped all the cities of the known world in size although its population was not to reach the million mark for some centuries. As with all ancient and medieval cities the transition from city to country was sudden. The surrounding countryside was fertile sea-side plain and wealthy through proximity to the city. Tempting outlying areas were still prey to marauding looters and disorder.

The miracles of Ss. Cosmas and Damian cover a wide span of time from the sixth century onwards, the latest text extending into the eleventh century. These saints were "dead" and had no need to be removed from immediate civil interference. The site was a sanctuary inside the city limits, administered by a full retinue of priests and attendants. The cult was imported and the promise of healing and the fame of the site brought pilgrims and sightseers from great distances. S. Theodore of Sykeon's monastery possessed an icon of Ss. Cosmas and Damian — their cult extended to Rome where a large Church of Byzantine craftsmanship still stands in their honour.

The miracles are related in six identifiable texts by as many authors spread over five centuries. They show not only the increasing reputation and expansion of the site and its accumulating wealth and burden of suppliants but also records many details of the changing fortunes of Constantinople and the altering social outlook of its citizens. Fears of enemies and increasingly

rigid hierarchies are among the matters found incidentally to the unfolding plot.

The life of Andreas Salos, or fool for the sake of Christ, perhaps adds little in this way. It has a curious history. The idea of the holy fool is more Asiatic than European and Andreas was not the only such figure. The text dates from the ninth century although set in the sixth. The historical Andreas, if there was one, is clouded in obscurity — only this anachronistic curio remains. It adds amusing details to our overall idea of a saint's life, activities and mishaps but little to the picture of the city. It does support the idea of saints' lives as "best-sellers" and may be the earliest example of a Byzantine historical novel.

Alexandria was the second largest city of the Eastern Empire. It had already a long, glorious and cosmopolitan past, spanning several cultures and dynasties. The size of the population at this period is difficult to determine, although a figure around a half million may be assumed. By the end of this early period it was again threatened and was soon to come under Arab rather than Byzantine influence. The sharpness of dividing lines between these two spheres of influence has been much exaggerated. Nevertheless we may here be viewing Alexandria at a period of contraction rather than expansion.

Our main source for Alexandria is the life of John the Almsgiver, he was of prosperous and illustrious parentage, his family having an impressive record in the imperial service. He was Archbishop of a great and wealthy city at a period when the reins of central control may have been considerably loosened. Alexandria in the early seventh century provided him with more influence than most provincial Eastern Bishops had any right to expect. Clearly he was also a person of considerable personal presence and individual power. The force of his actions and personality leaps from the texts in a manner no one could ignore, least of all his biographers. The two contemporary texts are from Sophronius and John Moschus and reverberate with life in a fashion very unlike those of other saints.

The other text based near Alexandria concerns the miracles of Ss. Cyrus and John. This is another narrative from Sophronius, the style again lively. These saints were also "dead" healers. The site had already been a pagan place of healing and as often happened, the cult of the pre-Christian god was merged and the place merely adopted. The sanctuary is referred to as an Asclæpidarium and clearly the methods of healing used there incorporated all those which could have been observed at any earlier centre dedicated to that god.

The saints' sanctuary was considerably removed from the city. Alexandria's position on the delta rendered it too humid and prone to infections and insect infestation. The miracles took place in a lighter, purer air, more akin to the invigorating atmosphere of Kos and Epidauros.

At Antioch we have only one source, the life of S. Symeon the younger, a stylite. This is available in parallel texts with translation and commentary by Van Den Ven. It was written down in around 595, soon after the demise of the saint, by a disciple. Antioch is called the megalopolis, and indeed

was among the largest and most influential of provincial centres. Nevertheless signs of change and decline are apparent and significant at this date. The picture is one of political confusion, religious disorder and a decided seediness. The civic image is very obviously slipping and there is an air of irresolute decadence about the citizens which seems bred of despair and lack of central control or purpose. The inhabitants teeter between orthodoxy, heresy and complete lapse to paganism and it is noticeable that S. Symeon has one of the most difficult passages in getting established as well as the most fraught period of ministry.

In a period when we know comparatively little of the standard of life on the fringes of Empire this source arguably has a significant contribution to make.

The cities are organised throughout this work into two groups. The great cities of the first group have now been dealt with. The position of Antioch is, as hinted above, ambiguous and a great deal more will be said on this point later.

The places included in the second group are Myra Seleuceia and Sykeon. These are moderate sized towns — not inconsiderable but not amongst the primary centres of commerce and administration. For purposes of comparison only, a sub-group of saints from more minor locations in Palestine and Syria are included in the selected texts and figure in this study as "Les Moines d'Orient" a title given by the theologian Festugière their student, translator and commentator.

The inclusion of such 'rural' material is justified by the contribution it makes. Urban preoccupations are thrown into sharper contrast. The tensions between city and surrounding country rivalries and proximities are made more obvious by their absence; the far away ideal of the πολις is an image which it is instructive to hold against the realities.

Returning to the intermediary towns of the second group, the texts are again helpful. Myra was the chosen centre of S. Nicholaos. It was not his birthplace, but as often happened, a place to which he was directed in a vision by God. It was already a centre of religious teaching and Nicholaos there received his liturgical training. After pilgrimage to Jerusalem and other holy sites, he was judged worthy to establish his own site, just outside Myra. This was a port on a narrow coastal plain surrounded by a cluster of villages clinging to life in the fertile spots — with considerable precariousness. The superstition and prejudice of the country areas are very apparent as is the nautical flavour of many of Nicholaos' clients from Myra itself.

The text dates from the late sixth century and the position of the town of Myra although close to the fringes of Byzantine influence appears to have been reasonably stable. Plague caused more trouble for the city — and Nicholaos — than invaders. Nicholaos after a full and successful life died shortly after a premonition of his end in 565 A.D. The text is available in parallel texts edited by Anrich.

The miracles of S. Thecla which relate to Seleuceia constitute the earliest material used in this study. The Bishop Basil, much affected by local trials of strength has to be forgiven for turning the telling of the miracles very transparently to his own advantage.

Seleuceia was a town of the Province of Isauria more or less directly to the north of Cyprus. The high Tauros mountains of the South Turkish coast press close to the sea leaving a very narrow coastal plain intersected at this point by a river which then flows to the sea through a small delta. The troublesome proximity of the lawless mountains sheltering bands of brigands is all too obvious. Due to the river and the pass through the mountains which its course created, Seleuceia was on a major routeway and of importance disproportionate to its size. The site dedicated to the martyr-saint Thecla was an adopted temple of ancient pagan associations. The hold of Christianity on the region was not, in the fifth century, entirely secure as can be seen clearly from the text. The hagiographer Bishop Basil employed considerable stylistic skill and enthusiasm for the saint in his battle against the return of older gods and spirits.

Sykeon, unlike the others, was an inland town in the province of Galatia. It too had its geographical importance being on a main route eastwards from Constantinople towards the Armenian Provinces and Cappadocia. The terrain is mountainous, the town on a relatively fertile plateau. The first decades of the seventh century, from which the life of S. Theodore dates, were very active in this area with frequent going and coming of imperial troops securing the frontier provinces against threat from the North and East. Theodore's mother kept an inn catering for the various needs of the troops; the saint himself was born as a result of one of her encounters as a courtesan. It is worth noting also that the business of the inn was sufficiently profitable to educate the child and send him, richly dressed, to Constantinople to further his career at the age of 6. During the reign of Heraclius, conditions were quiet enough for the Saint to travel easily to Constantinople, having previously visited Jerusalem on two occasions. Leaving the Empire in Heraclius' capable hands and having predicted the long and successful reign for that emperor, the Saint died in 613 and his life was swiftly recorded by Giorgios, a disciple and priest of the same monastery.

Both the miracles of S. Thecla and life of S. Theodore have been translated by Festugière and are available with a useful commentary.

Extra source material is sometimes incorporated in the form of epitaphs from Korykos a late fourth century to early fifth century town without its own saint. It was close to Seleuceia and provides an archaeological control to the vagaries of hagiography.

So much for the materials used — a summary of the evolving argument follows.... The first part of this study sets the scene with a portrait of society from hagiographic evidence at our disposal viewed with an eye to anthropological/sociological guidelines.

The second section considers the relationship between the society thus revealed and the activities of the Urban Saint. The Urban Saint is a phenomenon peculiar to Byzantium and to the early period. The central theme is that the activities of these saints were essential to the life and continuity of the cities in or outside which they functioned. Through this influence the saint gained disciples, a tradition, power and a certain institutional position in his own right. The mutual dependence of city and saint served to guarantee a certain lease of life for both of them.

A Map of the Eastern Mediterranean showing the sites of the Urban Saints

PART I: MEN, WOMEN AND SOCIETY

CHAPTER I: MEN IN BYZANTINE SOCIETY

Introduction

1 Method

- 1.1 Man in the family: a series of relationships
- 1.2 Career and society: reciprocal effect
- 1.3 Other items

2 Evidence: Family

- 2.1 Marriage
  - 2.21 Relations of man and wife
  - 2.22 Father and child
  - 2.23 Spiritual fatherhood
  - 2.24 Master and servant, household

3 Evidence: Career and Society

- 3.1 Cities of the first group
- 3.2 Cities of the second group

4 Summary

- 4.1 Family
- 4.2 Careers and other considerations

CHAPTER ONE

MEN IN BYZANTINE SOCIETY

The two chapters in this section aim to examine the men and women who composed the society which we are to consider. Byzantine society, more emphatically than most, was based upon the family unit and legitimate procreation — with traditional and religious backing. Both men and women are therefore examined in their rôle in the family which is then related to whatever function they may have in the society in general.

1.1 Within the family the man's position is best seen as a series of relationships. The primary ones were those between (i) husband and wife, (ii) father and child. Attendant on the latter was the peculiarly Byzantine rôle of spiritual fatherhood. Of these primary relationships, the focus was the marriage itself, which provides the best vantage point for observation. In addition there was, within the family or household, the relationship between the head of the house and the staff and other relatives.

1.2 The second part of the chapter deals with men in their career, and with the effects of family and career upon each other. It also views the male contribution to the stability of Byzantine society.

1.3 Hagiography also provides many items of incidental information in loose connection with the central subject. These are useful additions to the overall picture and, because of their incidental nature, require less cautious consideration than informative items where strong hagiographic bias is expected.

2. The Family. In many ways the male position in the family was one of secondary importance. The husband and father had ultimate executive power but for practical administrative purposes, the wife and mother was preeminent.

2.1 The meeting point of these various facets of family life for the Byzantine male was the marriage. Choice of partner was largely left to the parents. They took responsibility for the arrangements of the ceremony and continued to supervise the newly-weds' welfare. Christianity only served to strengthen the bonds of parents and children. Throughout the texts, fathers continued to interfere in the marriage arrangements of their children, particularly daughters, although the practical details were left to the wife and mother. The ceremony itself was a demonstration to business and social associates of the father's ability to provide for his children. The father-in-law of John the Almsgiver illustrated the permanence of the protective rôle by interfering on behalf of his daughter's conjugal rights. Social and legal sanction were behind him,[1] but when the situation was reversed, a husband could expect little parental aid in persuading his wife to fulfil her marital

duty in this respect. John, the father of Symeon, had to wait patiently until Martha received divine assurance that she was not required to remain celibate.[2]

Marriage was expected by society of all those capable of procreation. The ascetic life was a vocation — or an escape from marriage — but the commitment to either was too total to allow any individual to pursue both simultaneously. Parental choice and interference have been illustrated and continued to be a factor in the lives of the younger generation due to the prevalence of extended households containing several tiers of family inhabitants. The "family" might consist of ageing grandparents, unmarried or widowed uncles and aunts, particularly relatives of the wife, and the newly wed "children" still seeking to establish themselves in career, society and their own home. While such a structure persisted, an elaborate hierarchy of manners and responsibilities was essential.

One ramification of this close-knit family circle was that all the conspirators against Zeno were related to the dowager empress and, of course, each other. The final usurper, Basiliscos, was yet another distant relative.[3] A client of Cosmas and Damian was another illustration, for he brought to the healing compound both his wife and sister-in-law for cure from the complaint affecting them all.[4] The mother of Theodore of Sykeon ran her brothel-cum-hotel with the aid of sister, mother, and but for the inconsistent destiny of her son, doubtless her daughter too.[5]

2.21 The continuity of the family which such a set-up encouraged, and the responsibilities thus engendered, to a large extent governed the relationships the family contained. On husbands and wives, the healing saints shed the most light. Symeon and other "live" saints answered the pleas of sterile and starving couples, but other information can be gleaned. In most cases the woman supplicated for the saints' help on her own, for a variety of reasons. The most relevant of these was the convention designating her as the guardian of not only the children but also the husband's moral welfare. Illness of either party affected the other acutely. The woman who was sick was disgraced by failing to carry out her duties; the man, particularly a poor one, succumbing to illness, "lost his livelihood". In sickness as at other times, it was the husband's duty to protect his wife and to make the decisions directly affecting her life. A provincial army officer even forbade Cosmas and Damian to carry out surgery on his wife.[6] Another husband continued to seek help and protection for his spouse when his own demon passed on to her, although he complained of her "hard hearted" abandonment of him and their child.[7] Partly the motive for such care was the production and well-being of children, but this does not deny his genuine loving concern. Infertility or sudden conception following a long failure could also give rise to marital strain and suspicion. One husband had to be "reconciled" to the new state of affairs after twenty years of fruitless effort.[8] The inference is, of course, that husbands privately suspected their own capabilities and therefore their wives' fidelity — although to admit this publicly was unthinkable and indeed was not catered for in law or literature.

Approaches were made to healing and non-specific saints for non-medical purposes too. The oracular or clairvoyant powers of the "live" saints were

also found in "dead" ones and helped to dispel the suspicions of another husband. The speed and finality of divine arbitration spared the couple residual resentment and a lengthy struggle, and, in this way, could give a dubious marital relationship a fresh start. Wives also made non-medical demands upon the saint in this field. Their wish to civilise rude or disorderly husbands was the counterpart to the protection received and was also in line with the dictates of S. Paul's conception of the female rôle.[9] John the Almsgiver and Theodore of Sykeon also rescued women from physical ill-treatment at men's hands.

2.22 The mother, as will be seen, was responsible for the early training of children, but higher education and the acquisition of career skills and choice of employment were more in the province of the father. One father in the miracles of Cosmas and Damian sought out a travelling pedagogue — whose credentials he had bothered to check — to tutor his son.[10] He was a learned man, a prefect's archivist, and obviously cared that his son should be qualified to follow an equally if not more erudite and respectable occupation. Nepotism and/or the similarity of fathers' and sons' careers was a practical and economic reality in Byzantine society. However, I do not wish to argue in favour of the rigid occupational caste system suggested by earlier authors and which was energetically demolished by W. Ceran.[11] Pursuit of the more highly qualified and high-status professions, for instance, the father and son grammarians encountered by S. Thecla in a match of quotations, lent continuity and at least had the merit of insuring against decline in social status for the family.[12] Change was risky but for those with less to lose could bring spectacular improvement. One bemused artisan, a "butcher...since his infancy", was commanded by Cosmas and Damian to act as barber to an aristocratic fellow-sufferer. After the cure he practised successfully as a barber.[13]

Extended families and a relative lack of mobility combined with religious and popular ideology to encourage filial obedience and respect towards one's elders and parents. The continued influence of Martha on her son Symeon was just one example of this. Another outstanding case was that of the son of a great public official. Fearing his own inadequacy to plead his case before the saints, he sent for his trusted and respected father to intercede on his behalf. This action and the prompt response it evoked demonstrate the relationship between father and son more piquantly than could be achieved by many words.[14]

2.23 Such sentiments give rise to the consideration of the Byzantine phenomenon of "spiritual fatherhood." Although the essence of this was monastic and entailed the complete abdication of self-will and responsibility to an experienced brother by the novice, it found representation in the world outside the cloister. In its simplest form it could be the guardianship taken on by a sponsor or god-father at baptism. The responsibility was not only spiritual but was intended to be practical in cases of need. Naturally, the sponsors of whom we hear most were saints. However, not all families had such a prestigious candidate to hand and those who did engineer such a union were of suspiciouaIy high social standing. (cf. Chapter 3, 2.11.) Such a relationship was frequently of long standing. The goldsmith's son sponsored

by S. Daniel continued to visit the saint even when grown up.[15] It is not clear to what extent and at what age the spiritual father superseded the duties of the mother. In the cases recorded in hagiography, the child in question was always a son. For daughters it may have been considered unnecessary, since their mothers could instruct them in all the essential matters of being a wife and mother, and their father, as seen above, continued to protect them in practical affairs after their marriage. Baptism seems to have been also exclusive to male subjects — at least in these sources.[16]

2.24 The relationship of master to servant was in many ways similar to that of spiritual fatherhood. The head of the household had little to do with its detailed administration but he was responsible for the well-being of its members. One master applied through correspondence to S. Daniel for cures on behalf of his entire family and staff.[17] An ex-servant of John the Almsgiver was so influenced by his master and saint that he gave a silver cross (a gift from the Almsgiver) and a homily to a beggar.[18] Another of the saint's servants was relieved of public embarrassment by a secret monetary gift when he was afflicted by sudden poverty.[19] A servant who distinguished himself through intelligence and diligence could win favour from his master. Andreas Salos was made head steward and was given medical treatment and eventually his freedom by his master.[20]

3. Career and Society. Other information concerning the rôles of the man in the family can be gathered by looking at the woman's side of the matter and working backwards, but more is given, on the subject of careers, employment, and the position in society of men. The tendency towards continuity in family education, employment and status helped by marriage, dictated a man's career choice to a considerable degree, but openings existed for the talented and the daring. The career of the household head reflected upon family affairs yet in the male world was separated from them more than was possible in the female.

3.1 For Constantinople and Alexandria we are well informed in this sphere. Daniel offers a good insight into the political world of his time, since he needed and had many powerful friends. One of these was the "count of the sacred table", who had extensive estates and vineyards close to the city, around Daniel's chosen site. He found it necessary to hire local guards to protect them against raids by the populace.[21] This lack of law-enforcement outside the πολις was comparable to the situation at Seleuceia. There, Basil underlined the dangers of country travel and the rule of the brigands over the rural hinterland and its villages. The count may also have found the estates a convenient guarantee against a precarious fortune at court. An ex-consul and praetorian prefect illustrated the possibility of rapid rise through his personal talents.[22] His success was entirely "due to his sagacity", but he was as rapidly dislodged by a plot. Court was always a good breeding ground for jealousy and faction, especially against the over-successful — and perhaps also against those whose rise from humble origins was due to personal ability. His fate was to be sent to a small isolated town as a bishop. Comment on the use and status of such a job and on the ideological value of exile from the capital could not be clearer. The lure of the civic ethos continued to be compelling despite the instability of court life which was further illus-

trated by the near-disgrace of the "count of the stable" and of the imperial architect on the strength of the emperor's whim. For such as these the saint's enclosure provided asylum.[23]

Cosmas and Damian encountered a fairer cross-section of the population who were in need of their services, although most detail is still devoted to the bureaucracy and the powerful. Part of their policy involved using clients of widely disparate social backgrounds as instruments of each other's cures. The saints were supposedly above class and had particular duties towards the poor and unfortunate, but the later hagiographers of Cosmas and Damian betrayed the rigidity of their own attitudes. Of one courtier's cure-partner the epithet was that he was a mere actor, a "man such as he would himself employ." When a group of poor people received the attention of the site personnel prior to a wealthy aristocrat, the hagiographer concluded that preference had been shown because the recognised policy was one of "first come, first served."[24] These incidents show not only a polarisation of class distinctions but more incidental detail, for instance, the continuing vogue for private theatrical entertainment in chic Byzantine society.

Involvement in the miraculous could bring a dramatic change in career and fortune. The travels and travails of the pedagogue have already been mentioned. The great πολις acted as a magnet to all, but particularly to those with specialised skills. A low-ranking cleric of an heretical sect also experienced a dramatic change in his life-style when his cure turned him into a successful propagandist of the saints' deeds and into a religious leader. He wished to spread the good word "even to the crews of ships in the Atlantic" and finally became an orthodox preacher — a position of considerable status.[25]

Civic dignitaries played no part in the life of Andreas Salos. Diligence brought him seniority in his master's household and fraud brought him release into a world of minor clerics and widows, which was punctuated only by the attentions of Epiphanius and mention of corruption among deacons. This and the historical-novelette nature of the work, admirably argued by S. Murray, explain the heavy-handed symbolism aimed at a different, later audience.[26]

The Alexandrian healers, Cyrus and John, encountered a community artificially restricted to those with sufficient money and leisure to indulge in concern for their health. Again the status of patients is not always given but can often be deduced from tit-bits of information. A client on a litter "carried by sixteen slaves" was marked out as a man of wealth and some pomp. The fact that a deacon's daughter fell from a high window indicates that multi-storey houses were inhabited (though not exclusively) by the upper classes.[27] In the supposedly egalitarian situation of the saints' sanctuary, the deacons were also provided with a special rostrum.[28]

Poor men when ill were "deprived of their livelihood" as the hagiographer acknowledged, and were in consequence entitled to saintly aid.[29] Both they and better-off clients were liable to become indignant and blasphemous if they did not receive the help which they regarded as their due.

The professionals at Aboukir were fairly cosmopolitan. A building expert and geometrician were both noted by the hagiographer as being of Egyptian background. This observation may be intended to indicate continuing

national prowess in the mathematical and engineering field, but it also gives away the clients' income bracket. Cyrus and John were much interested in this aspect of men's situations, and prescribed cures for a tribune and an aristocrat suffering from a similar eye complaint. The bureaucrat was assumed to have sufficient money and leisure to undertake a pilgrimage to the holy sites of Jerusalem, particularly the pool of Siloam, while the other was enabled to heal himself with his own tears.[31] This developing social imbalance was underlined by John the Almsgiver's hagiographer in the following anecdote. A land-owner, while still wealthy enough to offer handsome gifts to the saint during a famine, intended these as the purchase-price of a deacon's appointment.[32] The privileges and exemptions which the office carried had become, if not essential, at least desirable as a safeguard of his position against erosion. The courtier mentioned earlier had completed the circle by purchasing estates and respectability.

Alexandrian sources also offer information on the professional and guild structures which existed. The numerous doctors evidently had some internal organisation and hierarchy of their own. The papyrus industry also was organised with terms of apprenticeship and its own rules. Earlier non-hagiographic evidence for the small town of Korykos hints at some guild-like organisation among the money-changers and silversmiths. But in these sources evidence for any well-defined comprehensive organisation is lacking. Strict codes of behaviour doubtless existed but another possible interpretation would be of a temporary breakdown or relaxation of the rigid system of the late Roman era.

John the Almsgiver had contacts with many foreigners and traders attracted to the busy port. Some of these occupied prominent positions and were engaged in the city's diplomatic and economic business. The hazards and rewards of marine trading are treated in vivid and familiar detail. The procedure for provision of ships, crews and cargo and for profitable investment appear well-tried if sometimes a little haphazard. More precise detail of money matters is given here in this source than in any other. An ex-servant who earned three nomismata per annum as a hot-water-carrier is a yardstick for wage and price levels.[33] On this income he could keep a wife and two children.[34] The saint found that the low wages of minor church officials encouraged corruption and he therefore increased their incomes — not always with the desired effect.[35] The wealth and bustle of Alexandria attracted hordes of beggars to whom it was the saint's duty and pleasure to attend and to give unceasingly.

One cause of financial difficulty for many was the heavy tax-burden which was aggravated by the cost of frontier defence. Nicetas eventually returned the saint's own tax contribution but others were dependent on the Almsgiver and on professional money-lenders.[36] One harrassed man was forced to turn to the saint when a grandee-officer postponed a promised tax-loan.[37] This incident illuminates a part of the Byzantine economy which is often considered controversial. Taxes as well as wages were obviously paid in cash — at least in urban areas. A well-established mechanism of loans and patronage is also apparent and upon it the tax-payer and collector had come to rely. Through this a developing class of military and bureaucratic land-owners derived power

and respectability. The philanthropic aspect of their action was praiseworthy and they reaped long-term benefits from the hold gained over those who would continue to need their help. The rise of this class is not an unknown phenomenon, but here it is seen in existence earlier than has often been realised.

There is also evidence for the continuation of traditional Egyptian industries, such as the production of papyrus. Church connections with trade also persisted — though not in all the forms noted by Wipzycha.[38] The insulter of the Almsgiver's nephew paid rent for his shop and taxes to the Alexandrian church.[39] Such arrangements must have been common. The impression gained of Alexandria is overwhelmingly of a busy and profitable city. One money-changer was so successful that his prosperity induced him to retire and become a philanthropist.[40] This flow of trade and money and the civic organisation was little disturbed by the proximity of enemy activity and periodic exchanges of prisoners.

The picture given by S. Symeon's biographer gives a very different impression of Antioch. Despite the tag of "the great metropolis" which he gave it for its wealth and magnetic qualities, its separation from the other two great cities becomes apparent. Symeon was an example of a saint caught between the needs of the urban and rural sections of his area of responsibility. By virtue of Mediterranean currents and winds, Antioch was more isolated from Constantinople than was Alexandria. Perhaps to match the harsh local surroundings, the emphasis inside Symeon's monastery was upon poverty and abstinence. Unlike the Almsgiver and Daniel, Symeon was without powerful local friends, and he had none of the authority conferred by high office or communication with the emperor. Symeon's struggles with the human and super-human powers of evil were acute; demons, sorcerers, and those corrupted by wealth and idelness opposed him as did the "tainted" members of the ruling class. Order as desired by the saint was only restored with the aid of an imperial emissary.

Racial prejudice was more in evidence at Antioch than in Constantinople — or Seleuceia. The Jewish physician attending Emperor Justin was labelled as a heretic and sorcerer.[41] The number of Jews in the medical profession was underlined by the reference in the miracles of S. Thecla to "going to the Jews".[42] Their presence in such a skilled profession may have added to the dislike expressed towards both Jews and doctors. There is a suggestion that Antioch was short of other forms of skilled labour. The city corporation had to pay high wages to engage a stonemason whose "gold", mentioned in the homily which he received on sight, was probably more than metaphorical.[43] Eight Armenians were also imported for civic projects. The amount stolen from them was two years' wages.[44] Since their wages were intact they were probably paid over and above living expenses, presumably under contract. Symeon's monastery was partially built by a group of grateful Isaurians.[45] Lack of money may have hindered him from acting before, but lack of a labour force might equally well have been responsible. Although the evidence indicates some civic disintegration, at least from the hagiographer's point of view, skilled workers were still prized and were needed for civic building projects.

3.2 The saints' responses to various social groups were if anything more pronounced in the smaller provincial cities and were often more pragmatic (cf. Ch. 4a 2.2) Nikolaos' concentration on the rural section of his area and responsibilities is one indication of this. His involvement with the sea-farers is another. This enables the audience to see how ναῦκληροι made extra money from the carriage of passengers as well as emphasising the devoutness of sailors. Evidence from Cosmas and Damian and from John the Almsgiver also suggests the growing volume of convoy trading for monastic and ecclesiastic supply. At Myra the rôle of the sea as the mainstay of the city's economy and employment is more obvious than at other centres. The city also housed skilled craftsmen. Wood carvers had to be summoned to Mt. Sion when the villages could not supply men of the calibre required.[46] A possible explanation is that the need for sufficient custom to make their craft viable had driven men of this type into the town.

Agriculture remained the main preoccupation of the rural population and the superstitious farming villagers received the largest portion of the saint's attention and benefited from the greatest exercise of his miraculous powers. These were the sufferers from malnutrition, threatened famine, infertility and fear of demons and of the frequently hostile spirits of the nature which surrounded them. On their behalf Nikolaos courted the wrath of the combined secular and ecclesiastical authorities, who seem to have been organised and united but not always in touch with the townspeople. In crises, the refugees from the countryside depended on the city whose population they temporarily swelled. The harshness of the environment seems also to have made this good saint-breeding territory, to judge from the numerous holy figures and places which Nikolaos visited on his journey when in disgrace.

Seleuceia was comparable with Myra in its seaboard position and in its harsh hinterland. But the miracles of S. Thecla reflect a different cultural and social picture. The administrative personnel was numerous and complex in structure. Panels of advocates, tribunals, several bureaux, and a governor to whom they were responsible and whom they advised, were all mentioned. In the city there were also a military commander of considerable standing and troops whose grain supply was the responsibility of two members of the city council. The prospects for a local government post for those of suitable background were therefore very good. Opportunities for corruption were correspondingly great and incidents of cheating and embezzlement are quoted. The numerous advocates also indicate the volume of litigation. In this and in general bureaucratic organisation Seleuceia seems better served than some later and larger civic centres. The advocates who figured in the local government administration may have had some guild-type organisation and were certainly of high social status, and wealthy — as the elaborate marriage preparations for their chief's daughter show.[47] (cf. Ch. 2 3.2). Basil concentrated mainly on the local δυνατοὶ in narrating the miracles. His position as bishop and special guardian of the saints and cult-site naturally influenced his selection of events and ideas to portray. Only one local artisan appeared in the saga. His life was dramatically altered by participation in the miraculous. As a ferryman he was classed with the "poor manual workers" of the city, but his cure transferred him to the ranks of the illustrious and changed his job from drudgery into a "noble service to all

Seleuceia'[48] at least as far as Basil (and his audience) were concerned.

Other items of interest concern the standard of education which was achieved and expected at Seleuceia. Basil was at pains to show off his own attainments as well as S. Thecla's and those of a genteel lady hostage from a neighbouring, but lesser, town.[49] Grammarians and professors also figured in the miracles. Local standards of literacy were high, and this was obviously regarded as a matter for self-congratulation and pride.[50]

The solidarity and cultural order of the town contrasted sharply with the insecurity of the surroundings. The absence of the rule of law in the hinterland helped the supremacy of demon-aided brigands who imperilled travellers. The mountain villages and towns were embroiled in incessant squabbles and populated by the lawless and the immoral who plagued Seleuceia and its bishop.[51]

Myra and Seleuceia were both important civic centres in their own right. Other towns were given their stature solely by the presence of a saint (or if they could claim to be his birthplace).[52] In such a case the problem of evolving a civic identity which was to dominate the surrounding hinterland was not so desperate. Theodore was the saint of such a community at Sykeon where a division between the affairs of town and country was visible but did not constitute a major dichotomy and stumbling block. Theodore, despite his extraordinary background of illegitimate birth as the son of a courtesan, succeeded in keeping on the right side of the authorities and of the governing class in general. He received gifts from secular and ecclesiastical dignitaries who found his patronage useful in a practical as well as a spiritual way. A certain amount can be learnt about the function of and reaction to the προτίκτορες Their official capacity aroused some opposition from the peasants and gave them ample opportunity for abuse of their position. Theodore crossed swords with one who oppressed the local peasants.[53] They in turn only dared complain in the knowledge of the saint's support. Another προτίκτωρ was admonished by Theodore for wife-beating — a unique example of employment and family matters being mentioned in the same breath.[54] Hypatius and the other saints in the sub-group of Festugière's "Moines d'Orient" supply little detailed information in this area except for the careers of the saints themselves. John Hesychaste showed the most interesting progression. Of high birth and a good education, he held office in the civic and imperial government after a successful military career. His brother-in-law was the governor of Armenia and unable to rise higher in provincial secular society and office, John became a bishop. His new rôle caused a breach between church and state, and John sought the "tranquility" of a desert saint's cell.[55] Despite this liking for isolation and quiet, even rural saints could display a pro-urban outlook. Hypatius remarked that Phrygian clerics were extremely ill-educated and stupid...."as was natural in the country".[56]

4. Summary. Career and place in society were the primary consideration of a Byzantine male's life. The competitive nature of society and the stress laid upon demonstrable material success was largely responsible and may also be culpable for the less well-defined ethical code relating to this side of life. The family, which was secondary though still enormously important, had its relationships and mores much more clearly defined.

4.1 The family affairs of the man were divided into primary and secondary sets of relationships which gave him a rôle with rigid, traditional and stabilising limits; division of responsibility was evident in all areas of family and household matters. To the man fell the selection of career and higher vocational education for his sons and a duty to appear a strong and responsible paterfamilias for the entire household — without actually concerning himself with its everyday running. Having relinquished this bothersome task to his wife, he was still responsible for her well-being and major decisions affecting her life. Much of his responsibility and the way in which it worked is left unsaid and can only be observed through the role of Byzantine woman. Such family life-style as is projected in hagiography belonged to those with homes and servants, which presupposed a certain standard of wealth and living. The poor, slaves, eunuchs and criminals figure little, if at all, in these sources and to some extent the picture of this sector of men's lives is, therefore, limited.

4.2 A rare occasion on which family and business came into contact was the event of a marriage. The family circle was wide and of extreme importance not only in itself but as a means of gaining business contacts and influence. A marriage ceremony was a major arena for extending this circle and putting such contacts into effect. The career of the son too infringed upon family and business matters. Training him for the same or a similar career as the father was a common practice and was enhanced by the use of various forms of nepotism and family influence and by the traditional respect in which a son held his father.

Hagiography gives glimpses into the extra-family life of all kinds of Byzantine citizens, poor and influential alike. The concentration of the hagiographer tends to be upon the powerful of the locality who most affected the life of the saint. Constantinople and Alexandria display the widest range of occupations, opportunities and status distinctions derived from work. This range spread from the courtly intrigues and preoccupations surrounding Daniel to the multitudinous amenities and occupations illustrated in the miracles of Cosmas and Damian and of John the Almsgiver to the rather rarified environment of Aboukir, the Alexandrian spa. Nevertheless, it was the biographer of Cyrus and John who isolated the problems of the sick poor.

It was also he, together with the biographer of John the Almsgiver, who drew attention to the changing balance of power between the old, landed aristocracy and the newer bureaucracy. It is possible that this was more noticeable at Alexandria where the two were less fused than at Constantinople. The plight of the ordinary tax-payer is also illuminated, along with the mechanisms by which it was circumvented. Alexandria with its enormous volume of commercial activity and its liquid assets must have been a good source of provincial cash for the imperial treasury.

Antioch does not present a picture of a balanced economy with a rich harvest for the capital. Its citizens did not display the same well-ordered response to their precarious geographical situation as the Alexandrians. The bureaucartic structure was there but required imperial and saintly interference to prevent its collapse under hardship, corruption and heresy.

This at least is the inference of Symeon's hagiographer — whose approach may not have been entirely open-minded. The balance of civic and regional interests was another problem which beset the saint and which was a basis for comparing Antioch not with the great cities, but with their lesser brethren of the second group. Both Seleuceia and Myra suffered most noticeably from this dichotomy, the latter with more serious repercussions for hagiography. Although both of them depended on the sea and upon agriculture, only at Myra is the reader made acutely aware of this; at Seleuceia he is far more occupied with a seeming army of officials. Virtually no other form of employment is mentioned in the city, and outside the impression is mainly of the hordes of brigands — who would otherwise presumably have been unemployed and/or bare subsistence farmers.

Evidence for lesser towns bears witness only to the existence of officials of local government and defence, an extensive peasantry, the occasional wandering or stationary holy man or a pagan opponent, such as a sorcerer, and clerics of various rank. From other evidence we can assume that this picture was discretionary rather than complete, because of evidence from other sources and because the petty craftsmen of the village were necessary for its survival.[57] The contacts and interests of the hagiographer give a far from fully representational portrait of urban life and even less of one in the semi-urban fringes. Nevertheless the picture is valid for the details it does give and which are unobtainable elsewhere, and for the insight given on the preoccupations within this sphere of the most articulate, widely spread and influential voice in early Byzantine society.

NOTES

1. John the Almsgiver, para. (1) 3.
2. Symeon, para 2-3.
3. S. Daniel, paras, 68-9.
4. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 16.
5. S. Theodore of Sykeon, para 1-4.
6. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 13.
7. Symeon, para. 229.
8. Ibid. para 118.
9. I. Corinthians 7.
10. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 18.
11. W. Ceran, see bibliography.
12. S. Thecla, mir. no. 24.
13. Change after the beginning of very early training would therefore seem to have been unusual. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 34.
14. Ibid., mir. no. 4.
15. S. Daniel, para. 86.
16. The normal age for this sacrament to be undertaken seems not to have been fixed.
17. Ibid., para. 88.
18. John the Almsgiver, (ii) i.
19. John the Almsgiver, para. (ii) 29.
20. Andreas Salos, para. 22.
21. S. Daniel, para. 25.
22. Ibid., para. 31.
23. Ibid., paras. 48-9.
24. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 39.
25. Ibid., mir. no. 26.
26. S. Murray, see bibliography.
27. Cyrus and John, paras. 5, 11.

28. Ibid., para. 61.

29. Ibid., para. 56.

30. Ibid., paras. 42, 49.

31. Ibid., paras. 47, 47.

32. John the Almsgiver, para. (ii) 12.

33. Ibid., para. (ii) 1.

34. This information also helps to make sense of the inscription from Korykos which reads that a person was "worth 2 (or 3) (silver) nomismata."

35. Ibid., para. (ii) 4.

36. Ibid., paras. (ii) ii, 29.

37. Ibid., para. (ii) 29.

38. Wipzycha, see bibliography.

39. John the Almsgiver, paras. (ii) 15-16.

40. Ibid., paras. (ii) 38-9.

41. Symeon, para. 210-11.

42. S. Thecla, mir. no. 2.

43. Symeon, para. 180.

44. Ibid., para. 237.

45. Ibid., para. 192.

46. S. Nikolaos, para. 19.

47. S. Thecla, mir. no. 5.

48. Ibid., mir. no. 7.

49. Ibid., mir. nos. 24-6, 131, 4.

50. Ibid., mir. nos. 24-6, 31. Basil may also have been extra eager to stress connections between the saint's cult and literacy in order to offset or disprove an exclusively pagan heritage of classical learning.

51. The author underlined his point by allowing himself some fanciful christening of such villages — for example "Lystraegonia", or robbers' corner.

52. Theodosius' birthplace was "an obscure village", but became through its association with the saint "illustrious and famous". (Moines d'Orient, III3, para. 1.)

53. Theodore of Sykeon, paras, 76-7.

54. Ibid., para. 149.

55. Moines d'Orient, vol. 3, part III, ch. i-v.

56. Ibid., vol. II, part (i), ch. i.

57. Epitaphs from Korykos show the wide variety of crafts practised in a smaller town of an earlier date. In part this obscurity may be due to peasants' double rôle as farmer and craftsman, but he was remembered for his major occupation which he shared with his fellow villagers.

CHAPTER II: THE POSITION OF BYZANTINE WOMEN

Introduction

Byzantine women compared to their classical predecessors
Difficulties of reading between (male) lines

1 Method

- 1.1 Division of normal and abnormal life-pattern — family rôle
- 1.2 Social rôle
- 1.3 Career women, the odd-ones-out

2 Evidence

- 2.1 Material and other advantages of the system
- 2.2 Women and the law

3 Evidence: Family

- 3.1 Marriage and procreation
- 3.2 Wife and double standards
- 3.3 Children and education for continuity
- 3.4 Religion and hospitality

4 Evidence: Society

- 4.1 Social rôle centred on the family
- 4.2 Leisure and gossip

5 Evidence: Career Women

- 5.1 Ecclesiastics and holy women
- 5.2 Women in power: empresses
- 5.3 Professionals: prostitutes
- 5.4 Female education according to a male-based ideology

6 Summary

CHAPTER TWO

THE POSITION OF BYZANTINE WOMEN

Finley has described the women of Rome as silent; Byzantine women were conspicuously unsilent. Their rôle in the family and in society has never, however, been accorded the attention it deserves. Many striking women figure in Byzantine political history, which distinguishes it from classical and eastern tradition.

Their influence was not synonymous with independence and was not a force for change. To a large extent, women's strength was dependent upon their ability both to represent and to promote order in the society and in the home. For this to be possible over a long period it was necessary that the established system of marital and maternal duties should have internal flexibility and external let-outs or alternatives.

The track of women in hagiography requires even more reading between the lines than other topics and the picture which emerges is sketchy but sufficient to contribute substantially to the overall impression of society and its framework which was put forward above.

1. Women divide conveniently in (a) those who fitted into the normal pattern of family events and (b) the odd ones out with careers.

1.1 The former category encompassed the vast majority of women. The family rôle included (i) husband-wife relations (including the marriage), (ii) child bearing and rearing in early years, (iii) household management. This last included running the household staff, hospitality (including the responsibility towards various unmarried or widowed relations) and also responsibility for the family's religious and moral rectitude.

1.2 Wives and mothers also had a part to play in society as they were the primary medium of gossip and communication in groups connected by family or other ties.

1.3 Career women in Byzantium consisted chiefly of the unmarriageable and those with a true vocation for the religious life, but also included women with power or with a profession, however rare.

2.1 This "system", it has to be admitted, had certain built-in advantages. Second class citizenship by marriage entailed material bonuses of protection and provision.

A woman brought to Ss. Cosmas and Damian by her husband was said to be "like all women, afraid of nausea".[1] Such a stereotyped attitude to women's weaknesses highlights another consideration: such evidence as we do possess about women was written by men belonging to a society of male-formulated values and for a predominantly male audience.

An advantage that this society held for both sexes was its indulgence for talented opportunists. Beauty and personality won advantageous marriages for ladies other than Theodora. Status was entirely dependent upon that of the husband. A less apparent but most important female advantage was a cultural inheritance of established family mores and rôles which required only to be fulfilled — and without interference, since the values which society imposed also inhibited male meddling.

2.2 Women were not without rights. The law allowed them to own property, they were entitled to divorce and retained some rights over their dowry. Early Byzantine legislation left the theoretical structure of Roman law little changed. Hagiography on the whole shuns the subjects found in legal codes and demonstrates its attitude only with regard to adultery. This omission cannot be taken as proof of their absence from the Byzantine scene — although the law code is undoubtedly equally misleading.

3. Family. Marriage, as in the previous chapter, is the best vantage point from which to view the relationships of the average Byzantine woman's life. Desires for legitimate procreation, (Christian) social practice, church, state and hagiography all joined forces to promote child-bearing and the marital state. Even an encounter between a dumb woman and a paralytic for healing purposes was resolved in marriage to fit the hagiographical design.[2] Irregularity in marriage was blamed for another client's illness. In yet another case the prospective bride's father threatened to find an alternative groom when the Christian of the girl's choice wished to delay the ceremony until she had been converted.

3.2 The wife's duties towards her husband included the careful nurture of his reputation, and since her own standing depended upon his, there was an element of vested interest. The reverse of this was that the husband should be counted fortunate by his peers in his choice of a wife whose virtue and ability for management as a mother and housekeeper reflected favourably on him. His bad qualities had in turn to be concealed by her. Without apology, the Odyssey is introduced as an apt parallel model — one with which Byzantine society was, moreover, well acquainted. Odysseus was complimented on his choice of a wife whose constancy, wisdom, justice and ability to retain the respect of children and household were so evident. The qualities were the same as those ascribed to the οἰκοδέσποινα in an Anatolian inscription recorded by L. Robert.[3]

Plutarch also wrote on the respect due to the "good woman". She was to be submissive, could always be conquered by forbearance and reason, and quarrels should be kept discreetly private. The rewards for the husband were to be lifelong.[4] Such noble forbearance was demonstrated by John, the husband of Martha, while he waited for her scruples on marriage and intercourse to be overcome.[5] Another husband continued to seek aid from Symeon for his demented, demon-possessed wife despite her "hard-hearted" desertion of the home and family and despite his obviously diminishing hold on her.[6]

Mistreated wives existed, of course, despite Christian ethics and legal sanctions against blatant misbehaviour. Hagiographical sources contain few

examples, as they were supposed to be morally inspiring for the audience, and therefore tended to minimise such unedifying details.

Another function of the wife was to act as guardian of the husband's civilised behaviour. Plutarch's advice that wives should play a large part in the development of the husband's attitude in this respect was echoed by Paul. After two wives consulted Symeon over their uncouth and rude spouses, there was a marked improvement in the husbands' behaviour.[7] The desperate step taken by the wife in publicising such unmentionable subjects may have been largely responsible for the change through the pressures of maintaining social appearances.

In adultery too the necessity of keeping up appearances favoured the continuation of double standards. One betrayed wife was afraid of the "outrage to her honour" — that is, public opinion which held her responsible and made her ridiculous.[8] (Her remedy from S. Thecla was an increase in her own beauty in order to recapture her husband from the attractions of his mistress — see Chapter 4). It was not the husband who was blamed, resented or punished by the wife or hagiography. The "failure" of the wife and evil charms of the mistress bore the responsibility instead.

The emphasis on physical attraction betrays the slant of Byzantine values, which was engrained in common cultural attitudes and which resulted from the predominant male interpretation of such matters. The same may be said of the "virtues" of women. They were an ideal based upon the male interpretation of the female counterparts of male virtues of endurance, strength and resourcefulness.

The moral tale surrounding adultery was continued through the same incident in the miracles of S. Thecla when the wife followed the Plutarchian code and never reprimanded her husband. The mistress was held chiefly to blame as she threatened the orderly pattern of marriage and legitimate procreation. Later, however, the same wife, now widowed, provided a further object lesson. She eloped with a common mule-breeder and was again to blame — this time for sacrificing her social assets as the widow of an influential military commander. Fidelity in widowhood was held to be desirable although not widely practised or required by law. The real "crime" was the social breach — while a man might marry beneath him with impunity if the woman had attractions enough to offer, a woman only lost by such foolhardy action.

Male adulterers are only mentioned in an adverse light where they were held guilty of other, more serious, sins. A group of revellers were attacked by Symeon, mainly on account of their blasphemy and idolatry — but adultery was also mentioned among their transgressions.[9]

Even the suspicion of adultery weighed unequally. One suspicious husband had recourse to the oracular powers of Ss. Cosmas and Damian for judgement on his wife.[10] A suspicious wife in the same situation could only wait. If her fear were confirmed she withdrew into the shell of her respectability, unless she could summon supernatural aid. Odysseus could run the whole gamut of sexual relationships and expect Penelope to wait "constant and wise" at home. She retained her virtues — and Odysseus returned to his home, to his hearth-tree which was also his bed and the pillar of his house.

The symbolism remained powerful and valid.[11] This was the stability of marriage on which the wife had to depend and usually could.

Details of the actual process of marriage are also informative. Martha and John the Almsgiver who wished to remain celibate were only persuaded to take on the "yoke of marriage" by the invocation of filial duty and obedience to their parents. While John waited for Martha to change her mind over marriage and celibacy, the father of John the Almsgiver's bride stepped in to threaten his son-in-law and protect the girl's conjugal rights.[12] The Almsgiver's biographer, moreover, saw no contradiction between this behaviour and his description of the "gentle and peaceloving, popular and beloved" young man. Social pressures favoured family life for all those capable of it. Family and ascetic lives could not be adequately performed simultaneously by anyone, but could take place one after the other. As Martha showed, a family of saints was not an impossibility.

In Byzantine society female children were valuable, at the very least as marriage pawns. Despite the necessity of providing a dowry, marriage of daughters was a sound economic and social investment. It expanded the all-important group of kin and associates. Therefore the choice of marriage partner was often too important to be left in the hands of the directly interested parties. Martha's parents selected John, and checked his credentials which were then listed by the hagiographer, and negotiations took place with his "respectable" parents. Weddings were public displays of the extent of families' wealth, status and influence. The marriage of an advocate's daughter related by Basil in the miracles of S. Thecla illustrates the social function of the ceremony. The depredations of the thief threatened the successful outcome for both parents and newly-weds. It was also significantly the mother's devotion to the saint which saved the situation.[13]

Understandably, unmarriageable daughters were a cause of family dismay and social shame. An important criterion for marriageability was the visual appearance of the girl. Many malformed daughters were taken to saints for a cure. The most detailed example was the affair of Justin's daughter whose cure from demon-possession was performed by Symeon the Younger. Because of her public position the case was proportionally more acute.[14] The distance of the agent of cure from Constantinople may have been an added convenience to the imperial family.

Spinster or widowhood relations often became part of the household of their more fortunate siblings. Such additions could lighten the load of the wife, mother and οἰκοδέσποινα Aunts, uncles and others aided in the early training of offspring, and for this service, board and lodging was a cheap return.

The pivot of marriage was procreation. Infertile wives appear often among the saints' clients. On this point, hagiography and the law concurred in promoting sexual inequality. Any suggestion that it might be attributable to the would-be father was never stated, only implied in a most roundabout way.

Witholding a legitimate heir was the ultimate female weapon, for though it might bring disgrace or even divorce for her, the missing link in the line

of his house was a disaster for the husband. There were, however, more subtle methods of bringing pressure to bear, but all involved some risk to the woman. Appeal to the saint, however public, was safer and offered a degree of reliability and respectability.

3.3 Penelope and Telemachus are again a useful illustration of mother-child relationships. Filial respect prevented him from throwing his mother out and also induced him to avenge her honour. Filial obedience has already been seen in operation in the matter of marriage for Martha and John the Almsgiver. When fully independent and established as a saint, Symeon continued to be obedient to his mother's demands. Her plea for the safety of Antioch both on her own account and because of its sanctity as Symeon's birthplace was answered. The strength of her hold on her son superseded even the convention which demanded that all saints should sever their family ties.

The education of very young children was in the mother's hands. The father's rôle in the child's further education and vocational training has already been illustrated (cf. Ch. 1 2.22). Aelius Aristides' preference for his nurse and servants reflects a pre-Christian state of household and family affairs such as hagiography would not admit.[15] The small boy of six who rescued himself from a wolf through prayers to the saint had his mother to thank for the early training which prompted this response to the situation.[16] Sick children were almost always taken to the saint by their mother. An epileptic whose father favoured consultation with doctors and practitioners of Hippocratic medicine was saved by his mother who sent him to Ss. Cyrus and John.[17] Another mother brought a dumb child to Daniel's monastery to be brought up as a minister of God. The inmates' suspicions of her real motives indicate the frequency with which overburdened mothers sought a way out of poverty and difficulty for their offspring.[18]

3.4 But these observations of mother and child relations have as much to do with the woman's position with regard to the family religion as with motherhood. This in turn brings us to consider the woman in the household. The task of the οἰκοδέσποινα was complex. It involved a successful combination of marital and maternal duties with those of administration. The hospitality and religious affairs of the house were also a part of this. Low standards in hospitality to kin and others endangered the good name of the house and therefore of its master. For this reason as well as for expediency, Penelope was never overtly hostile to her unwelcome guests. The ordinary running of the household was the wife's responsibility and was to be performed smoothly to allow the husband to get on with his tasks and career untroubled. In this, class and wealth made some difference. A large staff could be time-consuming to administrate but did alleviate the actual work-load for the οἰκοδέσποινα The allegiance of servants was undoubtedly to the housewife, however potent a figurehead the husband might be. The servants of the Jewess tricked into buying pork by Ss. Cosmas and Damian loyally concealed her transgression from her husband.[19]

The household religious observance was the wife's responsibility, though no longer in the same way as in the days of Roman libations to the ancestors. Respectful consciousness of family history was part of a religious-cultural heritage. Nevertheless there were counterbalances to this "age of male

erosion of female religious authority" alleged by P. Brown. Material already used enables us to examine this assertion. The mothers of the epileptic, of the child taken by the wolf, and of other sick offspring, were all responding to the quality in women which others, notably I. Lewis, have called an affinity for the emotive or ecstatic side of religion.[20] Such an affinity gave women a powerful ally and instrument of publicity in the saints. This publicity was experienced at the cult-site and spread through the medium of gossip. Upon manipulation of pressures of this very kind depended women's position in society, and it was theuse of their leisure time which made this a possibility. This situation was neatly summed up in the words of the hagiographer when discussing the cure of a deaf-mute lady of high rank in Constantinople. She was "shamefully tainted with her illness" because "she could not converse with others of her own kind". [21] Illness of any kind was a disfiguring disability. For a less fortunately placed woman it meant total inability to cope with everyday duties and the shame of being seen to fail. In both cases, but especially in the former, it was social disability which was the weighty factor.

4. Society. So much of her social rôle revolved around the family and its visible state of affairs that sharp divisions between the two for a married woman were largely academic. In this they differed from the men. Women's social influence was mainly as a collective force. The utilisation of the individual's leisure in a collective cause could have great effect. Gossip was the the threshing floor of reputations and the foundation of female influence. John the Almsgiver was aware of the damaging potential of gossip and forbad his followers to indulge in idle and malicious chat, pointing out the difficulty of regaining a good reputation once lost.[22] Gossip was a means of communicating news and was also a sounding-board for social mores and conventions and for their gradual change or retention. The leverage of this force, both obvious and subtle, was considerable. It was answered by a collective fear of women on the part of the men, which may help to account for the connection of women and evil common to several cultures and traceable in hagiography. Apart from the dread of temptation expressed by John of Lycopolis and other rural ascetics, there were incidents in which the female rôle was significantly connected with evil. Such was the instance of the wife of Emperor Justin, who insisted on keeping the services of the Jewish physician and sorcerer in defiance of Symeon's commands.[23] Yet this collective power achieved little on behalf of women. The pattern of female behaviour was established and was passed down from mother to daughter with little modification to the values and conventions imposed by male tradition. Conscious pressure was always towards ἁρμονία and away from the dangers of innnovation. Whenever the matter was raised for a saint's arbitration, the response was predictably that tried and established mores were advocated as a modus operandi.

Harmony was to be promoted in the family and in the social setting. The function of the (predominantly female) community group in this context is clearly demonstrated by an incident in the life of Symeon the Younger.

A robbed woman had been to the saint to complain and in hope of recovering her property and had been told to return home to find the goods. On her return she found the goods — and a crowd of neighbours wanting to hear what

the saint had said. Amongst the assembled listeners and potential reporters of her story was the thief, who, terrified by the miracle, confessed and was "cured".[24] Justice was thus accomplished through the group's power as arbiter of behaviour and as a gossip generator. Forbearance between members was vital to the life of the group.

5. Career women. There were in Byzantium some women who forsook or were excluded from this common pattern. These odd-ones-out fall into three groups.

5.1 Social pressures against spinsterhood have already been mentioned, but for the unmarriageable the religious life was a great face-saver. For women of high rank with ambition or genuine vocation the church was a good career opening; it could also be an escape from poverty or the unwelcome bridegroom. The deaconesses who appear in the sources were obviously of elevated social origin. The first travelled with an entourage of slaves and baggage on her "progress" which included a visit to Hypatius to test his orthodoxy. The second was an aunt of a nobilissimus on pilgrimage to Jerusalem where she was banned from visiting the holy man himself.[25] Both, however, enjoyed mobility which was denied to most women.

This brings to light an additional issue. Attitudes to women were not exempt from geographical variation. The desert ascetics were far more wary of the possible dangers of seeing women than were their more cosmopolitan counterparts.

Women could be saints as well as deaconesses.

Enough has already been said of Martha's divided activities, but the miracles of S. Thecla provide interesting additional material. Her hagiographer notes not only her omnipresent power but also her good education and her jealous protection of her site and attendants. Her attitude towards other women was mostly kind, but Basil showed himself harsh on moral lapses in other females. There is little in his portrait of her that is specifically feminine; her qualities could equally well be those of a male saint. She was comfortably outside yet did not conflict with the standardised female rôle.

5.2 Other women with power, education and mobility were empresses. Two visited Ss. Daniel and Euthymius. Unlike women in the church, empresses did have a family life. Since this varied more in degree than in type, we concentrate here on their extra-familial life. Eudoxia and Eudokia were relatively free to roam the empire and to get into political and religious discussions as no respectable woman should. They had also a duty to exercise philanthropia. Imperial and saintly beings as well as the wealthy with spare cash had the privileged duty to indulge in this activity. The social responsibility of an empress as distinct from her more ordinary family rôle was exceptional.

5.3 The other category of women outsiders is the only one which can be called professional. Several prostitutes appear in the sources, and enjoyed a favourable tolerance on the part of saints and hagiographers and little apparent social stigma. Unlike a long-term mistress, the occasional pleasures of a prostitute constituted no threat to the peace and order of family life and

legitimate procreation. Theodore of Sykeon, illegitimate son of a semi-reformed courtesan, was not excluded from becoming a saint. His mother could also afford a tutor and fine clothes for him, which indicates the success of her hostelry.[26] Another prostitute owned a silver chamber-pot; another, in Constantinople, could afford to retire into a life of philanthropic deeds.[27] Prostitutes usually received a favourable hagiographic press. The courtesan embroiled in the plot against S. Daniel repented, revealed the conspirators and was kindly treated by the saint and his audience when she was possessed by a demon.[28] Another prostitute was inspired by the Holy Ghost to harangue the sinful citizens of Antioch, partially in response to Symeon's plea for a leader of the people against evil.[29] Martha's philanthropia has already been mentioned, but the Constantinopolitan author introduced a further note of sophistication in his outlook when he implied that prostitution and crime were the result of poverty and insecurity in an urban environment. Such an enlightened attitude was far from the harshness of the penal codes and from the earlier and more provincial reaction of Basil to moral laxity.

One deduction which can be made from the evidence relating to outside women was that their position was accepted by society as long as it constituted no threat to its normal order. Career women were too rare to produce any radical effect, but this was not necessarily true of educated women. Hagiography, the scriptures and the classical literary heritage would have been available to and known by many, and the symbols and parallels which they employed would have been familiar. In particular, we are told that S. Thecla was well-read, "fond of oratory" and enjoyed intellectual exchanges with learned men. A female hostage living at her sanctuary was also reputed to be genteel and well educated.[30] Basil may have had his own reasons for magnifying female intelligence and education, but he could not have falsified the image beyond the point where it was acceptable to a local audience.

6. To summarise the position of women inevitably brings a certain amount of paradox. The vast majority of Byzantine women centred their lives round the established framework of marriage (often arranged), procreation (strongly urged), and good family and household management. This pattern was likely to have a background of a semi-extended family situation which necessitated inherent requirements such as rigidity in filial-parental relations of discipline and respect. It also enhanced the continuity of social behaviour and family conventions. This framework held advantages for women; firstly material and secondly in the strength they derived from their position as unquestioned and uninterfered-with guarantors of home order. One illustration of the stability of this situation is the applicability of Homeric and Plutarchan ethics.

Flexibility within the system also operated in women's favour. The difference between the legal and actual position in this matter was comparable to the same disparity in other fields, and also demonstrated the malleability of the situation inside the rigid framework. In addition, there were the outside alternatives for the woman whose ambition and talents required greater scope or an escape. Potential misfits or dissenters who might have endangered harmonious social living could be accommodated. For those who remained "inside", the connection between family and society was very close in a way

quite alien to male society. Social position and interaction revolved around family affairs. These were divided into different sets of relationships, all mutually dependent. Husband and wife relations were fraught with sexual inequalities, in adultery and other matters. The apparatus for harmonious coexistence was defined, but it was there. A two-tiered structure of responsibility existed in which the husband controlled the wife and her major decisions, while he ceded to her the full control of the household matters, including hospitality and religious observance, and of the children and their early training. For her part, the wife had to cope successfully in these areas to maintain not only her own honour and reputation as a supplementary to her husband's, but also to enable him to devote himself, unencumbered, to his career in society.

Her success in maintaining this balance determined a married woman's social position with her peers. To assert her position in this direction, she needed leisure and the ability to use it in association with her fellow-women. Should this capacity be lost or impaired, her influence declined and she had reason for shame. Groups of women had a collective power which was their means of influence, through gossip on topics ranging from individual reputations to social conventions. This collective strength was rightly feared by men although its potential was not exploited.

Close mother-child relations were urged by Christian teaching. For the first years of education and training in morals, values and religion, the mother was responsible. During this period a consciousness of family and wider heroism and history was instilled as an example, thus reducing any instinct for innovation and change. The woman's responsibility for children and household staff encouraged loyalty to her and the values of order which she represented.

Few noticeable differences emerge between the more and less intensely urban sources in family matters. But for the "outside" women more differences are apparent, according to location and time. Fear and shyness of women, for instance, is more explicit in earlier and more rural surroundings. The most extreme contrast is between the attitude of Ss. Cosmas and Damian's biographer towards crime in the city and Basil's indignation over the seduction of Thecia's virgin attendant. Basil and the hagiographer of Syria and Palestine would have found Constantinople distressingly "permissive". There was a difference, however, in their reaction to women. Basil described his few principal female characters very favourably — removing a great deal of their distinctly feminine attributes in the process. The saints and hagiographers further east blatantly expressed superstition and discrimination.

Obvious as much of the content and conclusions are, they deserve to be stated if only because they have been previously so neglected. Understanding the position of women requires a subtlety of approach unnecessary to an examination of material relating to men and their careers. In the family, however, the flexibility of the situation had to be a two-sided affair. The situation outlined here is liable to hagiographic bias. In viewing the whole picture, it must also be remembered that the modern reader is at the mercy of male writers, reflecting their own standards for a predominantly male audience.

NOTES

1. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 16.
2. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 24.
3. L. Robert in Hellenica XIII, pp. 35ff.
4. Plutarch, Moralia, Vol. 2, pp. 214-93.
5. Symeon, para. 2.
6. Symeon, para. 223.
7. Ibid., paras. 169, 212.
8. S. Thecla, mir. no. 4.
9. Symeon, para. 157.
10. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 25.
11. The Odyssey, ed. Murray, 1966.
12. John the Almsgiver, para. (i) 3.
13. S. Thecla, mir. no. 5.
14. Symeon, para. 208.
15. See C. Behr, in bibliography.
16. Symeon, para. 238.
17. Cyrus and John, para. 54.
18. S. Daniel, para. 89.
19. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 2.
20. I. M. Lewis, Ecstatic Religion — see bibliography.
21. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 7.
22. John the Almsgiver, para. (ii) 43.
23. Symeon, paras, 209-11.
24. Symeon, para. 181.
25. Moines d'Orient, vol. 3, part 3, chap. XXIII.
26. Theodore of Sykeon, para. 6.
27. Ibid., para. 40, and Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 12.
28. S. Daniel, paras. 39-40.

29. Symeon, para. 169.

30. S. Thecla, mir. nos. 24-6 and 3.

PART II SOCIETY AND THE SAINT

INTRODUCTION

The first part of this study dealt with the individual members of the family and their roles in society. It aimed to show the relations between family, social, and professional positions. From now on the main concern will be to examine the relations between the saint and society. The best way to do this is to look at the saints' most important and most frequent activities and attempt to set these against a background of the society's attitudes. This background reaches us through the medium of the hagiographer and allowances have to be made for this. As we shall see in Chapter five, the most time-consuming of the saints' functions were those of healing and exorcism. This medical activity was the most important specific type of encounter between the saint and other people.

Looking at these points of encounter more closely, we see interesting differentiations. The saint was both an individual endowed with a recognisable character and also the embodiment of a collection of conventions and attainments which were expected by society and were to a large extent stereotyped. These latter represented the institution of saintliness. Moreover, the clients whom the hagiographer described for the audience were also presented in two different ways. Either they were described in intimate detail to become "real characters" for the audience, or they were left more nebulous as persons, but identified in terms of the particular group or sectarian interest they represented.

A detailed examination of the evidence for both types of encounter is made in this and the following chapters. Here (Chapter three) we look at the saint and individuals, and afterwards (Chapter four) at saints and institutions. It should be noted that the "individuality" or "representative" function of the client does not necessarily determine the capacity in which the saint is being approached by him.

PART II: SOCIETY AND THE SAINT

CHAPTER III: THE SAINT AND INDIVIDUALS

Introduction to Part II

The saint active within the society

Introduction to Chapter III

Encounters between the saint and persons the basis of this activity
Persons portrayed as individuals or less well defined

1 Method

- 1.1 The criteria for calling a case "individual"
- 1.2 The use of language
- 1.3 The use of groups of cities (as in previous chapters)
- 1.4 Other divisions

2 Evidence

- 2.1 First group of cities:
  - 2.11 Friendly relationships
  - 2.12 Hostilities and particular local problems
  - 2.13 Other items
- 2.2 The second group of cities

3 The saint as an individual

4 Summary and conclusion

CHAPTER THREE

THE SAINTS AND INDIVIDUALS

1.1 To judge which encounters were regarded by the hagiographer to be important between saint and individual is necessarily a rather delicate procedure. Such an attitude is found where the client is depicted by the hagiographer to make the case stand out from the rest. The detail of the wording, names, the use of emphatic repetition, are a guide to this. Rhetorical refrains are also employed — to underline a moral — and indicate the author's concentration upon the case. Suitable criteria have to be established and the decision is bound to be partially subjective.

1.2 The language used is often a good guide. Sources vary with the idiosyncrasies of the author in the amount of rhetoric or repetition employed. Some catch-phrases are spread right across the collection. The saints in particular often carry similar descriptive (adjectival) words or phrases in wake. Such descriptions were conventions pertaining to the institution of saintliness, and to eulogistic writing, but they also indicate which particular attribute the hagiographer thought it appropriate to emphasise. The significance of a miracle is often underlined for the audience with a kind of concluding refrain. For example, after the second miracle of Cosmas and Damian in which a cure for cancer was accompanied by the conversion of a Jewess, the hagiographer chose to emphasise the connection of body and soul.

The formula is repeated in this and other texts to keep the point in the audience's mind. The use of linguistic devices — almost slogans — will be examined more fully in the last chapter of this study, "The saint and civic unity".

1.3 These chapters will, as far as possible, follow the method used previously; that is to say, sources are grouped according to city. Other relevant factors also influence the organisation. For instance, in the present chapter this is true of the distinction between "alive" and "dead" saints.

1.4 A "dead" saint could more easily be annexed by a particular locality or for a particular purpose, and was more manipulable by the hagiographer — whatever his aim might be. He was also a present reminder of a legendary past in which great feats and miracles were more totally credible. He brought the age of heroes and the martyr-saints, the true ἀθλητης of Christ, into current, inspiring reality. This process naturally enhanced the institutional side of the saint as well as the character with which he could be endowed, something which was largely dependent on the hagiographer and the personnel of the cult-site.

2. The evidence from the first group of cities. There are two major sources for each of the greatest cities, one "alive" and one "dead". The

picture is well balanced, but each source has a distinctive character of its own, which argues for the individual differences among saints and their biographers.

It can be said that generally the saints were supposed to think of their clients' cases individually. The answers or cures were very varied, even for persons in similar circumstances with the same problem. Cures were "tailor-made" with the social, economic and other personal circumstances of the individual in mind. So we are not working from a false basis but from one taken into account by hagiographers. But this may not be all. The hypothesis I should like to advance is that cases where clients receive "individual treatment" were carefully pre-selected by the hagiographer and for good reason. Firstly, this method would shape the figure with whom the audience was supposed to identify, and secondly, it could be used to highlight particular local problems and so provide more general comfort and solutions through the person and dealings of the saint. In so doing, it incidentally allowed ideas of the institution and individual personality of the saint to develop. It is shown, for example, that the saint, although representative of the power of the supernatural, could form friendships and relationships on a human level.

2.11 Such favouritism or friendship was limited to the "live" saints. S. Daniel and John the Almsgiver provided good examples. In both cases these friendships expose the saints to a certain suspicion. John's closest friend emerges as Nicetas, the imperial representative in the city who had responsibility for taxes and civic commerce. The Almsgiver even became godfather or sponsor at his child's baptism to cement the bond.[1] Daniel's friends are also among the usefully powerful. They were the imperial guardsman who gave vital protection and information from court, and (after some initial opposition) the count of the table, an aristocrat, courtier and land-owner.[2] We should certainly be justified in suspecting that saints chose their friends with an eye to their own political and social well-being. Daniel became so influential later that he could afford to befriend those in less stable positions. For instance, the ex-prefect and consul who had been banished to an isolated bishopric became a friend after his daughter had been cured and baptised. He offered the saint a new pillar.[3] This was a fiercely contended honour, as we see from the disappointment of an older friend thus denied the privilege. Later the saint befriended a relatively obscure Isaurian, Zeno, who had denounced an anti-imperial plot. The blessing of the saint followed the young man through his career of promotion and marriage into the imperial family, as also through adversity.[4] Even when Zeno was in exile, Daniel had the audacity to mention his name within the walls of Constantinople. With his saintly gift of prophecy Daniel can be assumed to have foreseen the future success of his protegé, or even to have worked towards it but at least he was more than a fair-weather friend.

The "dead" saints of the two great cities, healers in both cases, could not form friendships in this way. But their underlying kindness or friendliness towards mankind is constantly emphasised. In Cosmas and Damian in particular this is shown in a humorous approach to some clients which makes them stand out in the same way as those who shared the personal friendship of the living saint. The most notable of these is that of the paralytic man and the dumb woman. This miracle (no. 24) has been much quoted already and will be used again, so the details are not given here. The eccentricity of the shock

treatment employed and the culmination in the couple's marriage should be sufficient indication of the type of humour, the essentially kind approach, which is meant.

With Cyrus and John the tone is one of diffused kindness once again. When a poor man was ill and deprived of his livelihood the hagiographer emphasised that the saints loved the poor and thought him worthy of healing.[5] Another indication of their thoughtfulness is the way in which cures are related to the individual's needs. A tribune and a patrician both suffering from the same kind of eye complaint receive very different treatment. To emphasise the contrast, their cases are recorded consecutively. (paras. 46-7; see Ch. 1, 3.1) As well as forming an interesting social and economic comment (as discussed above), the saints' attention to detail is made apparent.

2.12 As might be expected, opponents of the saint, as well as friends, are strongly brought to life by the hagiographer. In Daniel the Stylite there was an opposing demon, who infected the children of Daniel's clients in a long-drawn-out battle for supremacy. In the final détente, the evil spirit's appearance, admission of multiple guilt and submission are most graphically described.[6] This, and his recurring appearance, lend him substance for the reader. A more tangible force of evil appears in the text of Cyrus and John. This was Rhodope, the immigrant "King of Antioch".[7] He was described as arrogant and accused of belittling the saints. In a rare moment of intractability the saints condemned him to return to his home and await the final separation of body and soul. The case was felt to be utterly hopeless and the treatment designed accordingly. The harshness of this case, in which the saints could be said to have failed, can be construed as a warning. The basic message of redemption through divine aid was reinforced by the promise of hell in the face of stubborn human self-will.

Human arrogance or a lack of proper orthodox belief was a universal problem. Often it took the form of prolonged disbelief in the powers of the saints. It is an interesting comment on Byzantine attitudes that such a continuation of doubt was aligned with irrationality. Twice in the miracles of Cyrus and John the conversion to orthodoxy is ascribed to the powers of reason. The case of Gesios is most relevant here.[8] The author went to some lengths to narrate the case. The final submission was confidently ascribed to the fact that he could no longer withstand the saints' rationale. It should be noted that he was a member of the iatrasophists, an élitist group well versed in classical medicine and a particular threat to the saints because of their own peripatetic life and ascetic appeal. The conquest by reason had a purpose of topical significance.

This case lends support to the hypothesis that universal problems were not the only ones which were highlighted. The sources were also utilised to bring home peculiarly local problems facing the saint or cult-site. In Alexandria iatrasophists were a challenge to the healing powers of the Cyrus and John site. In order to "prove" orthodox superiority, such polemic narratives were thought to be particularly effective.

Another aspect of life in the greatest urban centres was the dissipation of rich, unoccupied youth. This is expressed in the case of Count Julian.[9] The personal and moral dangers which beset anyone in this position were

obviously a factor of which the saints and the hagiographers defending social mores were only too well aware. Alexandria was, it is evident from the combined sources, a reasonably well-ordered metropolis. It was wealthy, and although beleaguered by enemy forces the continuity of civic life was not yet seriously disrupted. From the account which we receive from S. Symeon the Younger it is clear that Antioch was by no means in such favourable circumstances. This point will be clarified when Antioch is scrutinised in its turn. But it should be observed that the problem of dissipated citizens was universal to some extent and was recognised to be directly related to the "tone" of civic life.

There were other forms of corruption against which the saint was expected to take a stand. Some of the cases of individual treatment by the hagiographer, about to be examined, indicate areas of special vulnerability. John the Almsgiver is perhaps the saint who most conspicuously combats specific abuses. As he is portrayed as the focus of all kinds of power in Alexandria, it is not surprising that the tale of his life reflects a very large section of the spectrum of events in city life. The political situation there is reflected in the saint's involvement in the negotiations for exchanging prisoners with the Persians.[10] His position led to disagreement as well as friendship with Nicetas. They quarrelled first over the Almsgiver's own taxes, then over the profit margin of the market and the rights and wrongs of taxation and poor relief.[11] Shortage of immediate cash to meet tax demands and of long-term financial security are indicated as the reasons for much abuse. These instances are singled out by the author for individual treatment and are interesting for several reasons. The hagiographer saw fit to represent them in an unfavourable light, perhaps as a warning of a growing trend. In so doing, he has uncovered for the modern observer points that are often held to be controversial or have been ascribed to later periods of Byzantine history.

For example, it is quite clear from this source that taxes and dues of all kinds were payable in cash not in kind. Wages were also mentioned, some being paid in silver. The existence of a silver currency at this date has been in dispute. Important information on the commercial sector is thus conveyed, though not necessarily intentionally, and a more detailed discussion of these points was contained in Chapter I. Monetary abuses were a subject close to the hagiographer's heart (as we have already see in Chapter I). These involvements also provide information on development and change in land-ownership and class structures, caused by habitual abuse of the social system. The author sought to expose this corruption. To summarise the situation: the "ordinary" citizen bore a heavy tax burden. This was increased in the face of defence needs on the eastern frontier. Cash for these payments was often borrowed from a prospering class of professional soldiers. They were beginning to establish themselves with landholdings and gained not only long-term profit and security but also some kind of spurious respectability from their role as money-lenders. On the other hand, the older type of aristocracy, the land-owners, lived in a world of diminishing returns and were forced to seek security for the future. The wealth they possessed provided useful bargaining power in an attempt to put themselves into a class with more up-to-date privileges. In spite of sporadic efforts to correct the situation through legislation, such a class, the diaconate, qualified for tax-exemptions and had relatively few

responsibilities. Here we see the powers of the saint reflecting intermittent attempts of the central government to curb a growing problem.

Recognised abuses were not the only ones the Almsgiver fought in the person of individuals. There was also the case of the saint's nephew. He found that it was no use relying on the normal family loyalties and nepotism. His uncle was not prepared to favour him in his dispute with local tradesmen.[12] The hagiographer remarks that John showed himself to be the "true physician" in soothing his nephew and then conciliating the other party. The shopkeeper, doubtless expecting terrible retribution as would have been normal, instead found his taxes and the rent of the shop, which was church-owned, remitted. The saint had struck again — this time at a convention which was accepted by by the society but which was open to flagrant abuse.

Other individual cases dealt with by the Almsgiver concern the operation of philanthropia. The beggar who kept asking for more and who was finally given the saint's purse to dip into for himself was one receiver of this.[13] He too illustrates that a conventional activity of emperors, saints and the conscientious wealthy was open to abuse by greed.

Nevertheless the saint was happy to grant the pauper's wish. The reason he gave was that he could not be certain that it was not Christ testing him in disguise. The message of this incident is that the giving was the most important element in the transaction. Irrespective of the worthiness of the recipient, giving was a duty and the fulfilment of it conferred grace — upon the donor. In a similarly unbusinesslike way the saint gave without question to a prominent foreign citizen who had been burgled and to a ship's captain in his employ who repeatedly lost his vessel and cargo in wrecks.[14] The virtue of the giver was emphasised when the third cargo of merchandise, obtained in Britain, turned from base metal to a fine silver reward overnight. This attitude was not lost on the Alexandrians. When the Almsgiver's own resources seemed exhausted and his ships lost, they rallied to him with support and encouragement. Their aid proved unnecessary, for the saint's ships returned home laden. The tale was recorded for the inspiration of their successors.

Beside the Almsgiver himself, whose strong personality emerges even from these short extracts, most other characters are dwarfed. The mean bishop, horarding money for ornamental silver, however, was depicted clearly. The saint took him round the poor quarters to show what had been done and how much was still needed. After persuasion the bishop was parted from a moderate sum to be spent on further provisions for the poor. In very realistic form, he fell ill from the frustration of thinking about the incident.[15] The Almsgiver acted in accordance with the epithet of "true physician" previously awarded him by the hagiographer. He visited and reimbursed the sick bishop, relieving but shaming him. As with the arrogant Rhodope, Cyrus and John's "failure" was used to emphasise the benefits of moral rectitude and generosity. The all-too-human fault of meanness, like arrogance, was derided and seen to bring its just deserts, mental, physical and material.

Daniel's sphere was much more political. Besides demons, the tasks facing him were not to do with commercial corruption but with the wielding of political influence, particularly at court. As hinted previously, those of his friends depicted as individuals frequently held some of this power.

Again interesting facets of social structure are revealed. The characters in Daniel's life on the whole do not come to him for material aid. The exceptions to this are those who brought sick children and who have been mentioned already. Unlike the clients of John the Almsgiver and of the healing saints, Daniel's came mostly for advice. The saint therefore had to keep himself well-informed on current affairs and proceedings at court, to be perspicacious, and above all to have a personality forceful enough to command instant trust. These qualities were apparently abundant. He was not only consulted on personal matters such as names for children, but was even made arbitrator between the emperor and the King of the Lazi.[16] The individuals in Daniel's "life" represent his strengths rather than his problems. We see that his sanctuary was immune from governmental interference, a focus of political asylum. The count of the stables availed himself of it when the emperor was displeased after the dangerous behaviour of his horse.[17] Another figure of power was the emperor Leo Himself. His exalted station prevented him from becoming as fully characterised a member of the dramatis personae as he might otherwise have been. Nevertheless he played a vital part in the main action of the narrative. Although he figured as an individual in some ways, this is always secondary to his role as the embodiment of the state and imperial power. In Daniel's case the power centre is, of course, unmediated by the presence of a local government force.

This examination of the sources relating to the two major cities reveals that several sorts of clients are treated as individuals and for various reasons. For instance, we see that the saint could show friendship and so was made more approachable and human. For this reason Cosmas and Damian in particular were endowed with a great sense of humour. On closer examination, these friendships or associations are often revealed to be politically or socially advantageous — to the saint. Persons in social and political positions of power therefore became natural candidates for this type of individual treatment. This is most obvious in the case of Daniel, to whom sources of power were were especially important for the conduct of his ministry. Sources of power favourable to Daniel as well as those in opposition are represented. Elsewhere, strong individual definition tends to be reserved for the demonstration of evils which it was the saints' duty to fight and, in order to encourage the audience, to overcome. Lastly in the group of major cities comes Antioch, represented in the account of another "live" saint, Symeon the Younger.

Mention has already been made of the way in which Antioch's reaction to its circumstances of war and its difficult access to Constantinople differentiated it from the other two great cosmopolitan centres. This apparent difference may well have been enhanced by Symeon's own location outside the city boundary, which resulted in his attracting all the problems of the rural hinterland. Examples of these were village disputes and the tensions brought about by seasonal unemployment and poverty. Symeon's attention had to be divided between urban and rural affairs. The same split is apparent in the tasks of saints attached to cities in the second group, particularly in the case of Nikolaos of Myra.

The first character to impinge upon the reader of the Antiochene source is Martha the mother of Symeon. The impression she makes is strengthened by repeated appearances. Her struggle to remain a virgin dedicated to Christ

and her subsequent acquiescence to the wishes of her parents are made very credible. They also make an interesting comparison with the reactions of John the Almsgiver in similar circumstances.[18] Martha's feelings and slow acceptance of the roles of wife and mother are most humanly portrayed. At the same time, she, like the Almsgiver, represents the conventional virtue of filial obedience. Similarly, Symeon's duty to her later caused him to intercede for Antioch and rescue its citizens from further destruction by earthquake.[19]

During Symeon's childhood and apprenticeship in the monastery there were other encounters worthy of mention. The first was that between the spiritual mentor, the abbot, and the fiercely ascetic novice. This illuminates clearly the difficulties for an authority in a small community which contained a potential saint.[20]

The jealousy and subsequent illness of his fellow-monk together with his cure and forgiveness by Symeon demonstrate the problem of acceptance of such a phenomenon in their midst — by "brothers", let alone by society in general.[21] The saint had to establish his position and secure it from human opposition and suspicion. This was to be achieved by love of his fellow men — hence the tactic of confounding the enemy with generous pardon. Outside the monastery Symeon still experienced the problem of rejection by men motivated by fear, arrogance and jealousy. In the rural section of his ministry, the main source of opposition was from sorcerers, seers and other pagan village commodities whom the saint threatened to put out of business. The problem of lapses into blasphemy and idolatry was less extreme. A village priest was accused of lacking faith when he showed himself worried about the health of the village children.[22] But the extent of complaints about faith in rural communities pales beside the list of city offenders.

There, rich citizens mocked Symeon and for their various evils, lost all their possessions.[23] The notoriety of the city was such that an imperial officer had to be sent to punish the ranks of the unorthodox. We are told that he found all the persons of importance in the city tainted with sins of heresy and idolatry.[24] The saint had taken on a task of vast proportions. At a local level the performance of his duties was complicated by the rigidity of the class structure. While in some measure he acquiesced and used it advantageously in choosing friends, the saint had also to combat it. When a notable was placed at the head of the queue for the Eucharist by one of the disciples, Symeon set an example by making the man wait his turn.[25] The notable again demonstrated the low spiritual state of important citizens. He was detected as being guilty of a multitude of offences against orthodoxy as well as of crimes of a more civic nature.

Symeon was not only required to deal with local problems, although these were the overriding concern of saint and biographer. The hagiographer was at pains to show that the saint's influence extended as far as Constantinople. A silentarios wrote to consult him about marital affairs.[26] The emperor Justin also sought aid from him in the case of treatment for his demon-possessed daughter.[27] It may not be significant, but it is interesting, that both of these cases relate to matters which would be the cause of great shame, especially locally. The point is made graphically in the case of the young princess, who for obvious reasons needed to be in a fit condition to be on public display. Individuals of importance would have found such face-saving at a distance very

convenient. Their cases in turn demonstrate for the author the range of the saint's powers. Symeon's involvement with the imperial family did not, however, end there. Although Justin's main role was to represent the imperial office and the state, his repeated appearances and the variety of circumstances in which he figured qualify him for attention here. The cure of his daughter was not the only encounter between him and the saint. Symeon had earlier demonstrated his gift for prophecy in foretelling the succession of both the new emperor and the patriarch.[28] Although this prophecy was intended to be private, it had become widely known and presumably believed. The new emperor might then owe the saint a debt of gratitude for biasing the public towards him. This tie was reinforced by the daughter's cure. The hagiographer goes on to show how it was broken, by the empress' continuing employment of a Jewish doctor for the emperor. This defiance of the saint's commands shows the possibility of a wife's bad influence, especially when her husband was sick. (In two other instances, paras. 169 and 212, the wife and mother's influence is portrayed very favourably). The connection of the female and evil was not often stated explicitly, but it does find expression here. The doctor's Judaism was also an invitation for the charge of blasphemy and sorcery to be levelled against him.

[γὰρ οὗτος καὶ δαιμόνων θεραπευτὴς γοητείαις ἐνασχολούμενος ἀεί.][29]

The emperor's association with Symeon, both institutional and personal, was terminated forthwith. Physical illness ended in madness and death. Even for the greatest there was no return to righteousness if too much time elapsed.

Symeon's powers were also effective indirectly. In two instances his garment or hair proved efficacious healing aids. For example, a priest requested a lock of hair and set up a miniature cult-site using the healing properties of the "relic".[30] The local bishop's opposition makes the case more interesting. His objection was supposedly to Symeon himself. But we may suspect that at least some of it was provoked by the presence of a non-establishment element within his jurisdiction.

Symeon, unlike the healing saints of the great cities, had occasion to exercise his power to restore life. The subject of the miracle was a child. The point of interest for the present issue is that Symeon's intention was opposed by a local official, the magistrianos.[31] Petty officialdom was another source from which the saint could expect petty opposition. In this instance — despite biblical "justification" for the magistrianos — the saint won the day.

So we have seen a variety of incidents in which clients were treated as individuals by the hagiographer for the greater edification of the audience. These examples show the use of such cases to illustrate a range of areas in which the saint was particularly harrassed or particularly powerful, or both.

2.13 In addition there are cases in the life of Symeon the Younger which are not remarkable for illustrating such matters but which are extremely interesting for the incidental items of information which they contain.[32] Such interest is greater for the modern reader than it would have been for contemporaries, so that we must look for additional reasons for their selection by the hagiographer. Two such items occur close together in the source. The

first is that of a stonemason with an eye-complaint. Interesting to the modern reader is the fact that he was employed by the city corporation and for a stated monetary wage. This point has been discussed already in Chapter I. The reason for its selection by the hagiographer is in the second part of the miracle. The mason had been deprived not only of money but also of sight. This gives an opportunity for a rhetorical soliloquy on the part of the author. Sight or "light", the sufferer was reminded, was far more important than base "gold". This is in line with emphasis laid on the importance of vision and visual beauty elsewhere in the sources — the latter especially in marriage matters. Blindness, it should also be remembered, was classed as a deformity.

The second incident, following hard on the heels of the first, also concerns a robbery. This time it was a housewife who suffered. On her return from the saint's audience a group of neighbours, including the thief, crowded round to await her report of events. They witnessed the finding of the goods replaced in the house in accordance with the saint's advice. The terrified thief confessed, repented and was "cured". The interest for both the modern reader and the contemporary audience is the group structure revealed. Within the large urban unit, small community groups existed with such bases as areas of housing. Within these the power of gossip was supreme. The group was quite likely to include potential thieves and petty criminals or offenders. It also contained elements of effective local justice. The detected thief had to make his peace with the group as well as with his own conscience. Such solutions were perfectly acceptable and indeed necessary in a city where public justice was slow and often inaccessible and where mobility was limited.

2.2. The second group of cities. Now we move on to the sources attached to the group of the smaller cities. The overall pattern does not change. Accounts of miracles illustrate local problems and the saint's corresponding strengths. The types of problem related to this group are often similar to those of Antioch but are less close to those of the two greatest cities.

Nikolaos of Myra has already been mentioned as subject to the same urban-rural tension as Symeon the Younger. In his case it was more developed and obvious. Exacerbated by famine conditions it exploded. Nikolaos refused to meet the demand of the civic and church dignitaries that he should go into Myra to aid them with the starving population and refugees from the surrounding country.[33] His decision to stay outside and help the farmers and remaining country-dwellers defied the expected civic loyalties to which Symeon acquiesced on the insistence of his mother. Thus Nikolaos succeeded in ranging all the internal urban powers against him. Discussion of this incident really belongs to the following chapter, but mention of it has to be made here to illustrate the dichotomy between urban and rural affairs in the saint's activities.

Famine was an endemic local problem, and was particularly serious in smaller towns which could not afford to import grain and other raw materials in the event of failure of the marginal agriculture. Livestock disease was an accompanying hazard, as is made plain in the miracles of S. Thecla of Seleuceia.[34] There, we are told, both rich and poor were affected by the pestilence among the cattle, sheep, goats and other animals. S. Demetrius of Thessalonica's miracles also contain a reference to plague among humans. This, like the famine and earthquakes at Antioch, was supposedly divine punishment for the city's evil doings, and was both diagnosable and reversible by the inter-

cessionary efforts of the saint. In this context, however, these matters do not give rise to any incidents of individual note.

An indirect effect of the urban-rural dichotomy is the emphasis laid by the hagiographer on the saint's reaction to the social and professional class structures of the area. Nikolaos' flouting of the civic and church dignitaries and their expectations of him has been mentioned above. Correspondingly, his warmest and most detailed encounters and those the hagiographer portrayed as most meritorious were those involving sailors and the merchant-shipmasters, the ναύκληροι ; of these, the ναύκληροι who offered their services to convey the saint to Jerusalem on pilgrimage receive the most space.[35] Great attention is also paid to one sailor in particular who had the presence of mind to secure a protecting cross to the mast of his ship during a demon-provoked storm.[36] The demon was grappled with, surrounded, isolated and finally overpowered. There can be little doubt as to the significance of this narrative. A large section of the population of Myra depended on the sea for a living, and in this way the average citizen of Myra was encouraged to face up to, and triumph over, the evil forces confronting him.

Attention to the local environment is also in evidence in the section of the saint's work concerned with the countryside. Repeated mention of the same village names — an element found also in the case of Theodore of Sykeon — lent conviction. The prevalence of demons in natural things such as well-water and wood in the early part of the text also adds local rural flavour. In addition, it demonstrates that the saint had to face residual pagan superstition. In the case of S. Thecla, unlike that of Nikolaos, this supernatural force was personified. Her pagan rival was Sarpedon, whose power she had to "overthrow" in order to gain ascendancy over both the site and the city. Even then, her healing powers were attributed to the older-established Sarpedon by one pagan professor.[37] Clearly her image was not immediately more credible or appealing than that of her opponent. Nature demons in a forbidding landscape and hostile environment made more fearful by a lack of extra-mural law and order were not easily discounted.

Two facets of hagiography figure especially strongly in this source. The first is the use of symbolism. The saint's mountain headquarters are referred to metaphorically as the ship of state and as Jerusalem.[38] Biblical echoes, particularly of Jesus' life and miracles, are most noticeable. (cf. Ch. 4B, sect. 3). The second aspect is the concept of the spiritual father mentioned in Chapter I and here seen in Nikolaos' care for his second-in-command, Artemas. The latter is never described, but appears repeatedly in the narrative. We see him chosen as the saint's aide and placed in charge of the newly-founded monastery on Mt. Sion, in which capacity he must have relieved the saint of many administrative cares. Later we see Artemas assailed by the Devil both physically and mentally.[39] He was guarded, however, by the ever-watchful saint and saved from temptation and night attacks. Nikolaos had assumed responsibility for the body and soul of his aide, and it was the hagiographer's business to advertise the saint's success.

Other areas of competence which are more common throughout the sources appear here too. Among those who flocked to the saint were sterile and starving couples who were cured and helped, and crowds of onlookers who were fed. He also made a prophecy concerning the termination of the episcopacy of the

bishop.[40] In the miracles of S. Thecla, too, dreams and clairvoyance occur around the time of the death of the metropolitan of Tarsus, so that the animosity between the bishop and the saint/hagiographer is clear enough. In the present case it is more conjectural, but after Nikolaos' previous clash with the church and state authorities, relations must have been precarious.

Passing on to the miracles of S. Thecla, we find many similarities in the circumstances of the two towns. One fundamental difference, however, should be kept in mind. Thecla was a "dead" saint, and her legend was being deliberately kept alive, refurbished, transcribed into a consciously designed literary cult. Basil, the bishop and author, emerges from the text as a dominating personality. I suggest this is one of the clearest cases of a careful moulding of the legend to suit the needs of local (and personal) circumstances. Seleuceia's major problems of law and order are depicted as external ones. Brigands marauding with the aid of demons and evil-doers, always from neighbouring, smaller towns and villages, were the main culprits. Perhaps by virtue of the close relationship which Basil claims both between the saint and himself and between the saint and the city, this source is intimate in nature. The society portrayed is limited in size and closely integrated. A high proportion of the obviously pre-selected miracles are cases which involve individuals, and many were reported by acquaintances of the author — at first or second hand.

The first miracle is devoted to narrating the dislodgement of Sarpedon from his rocky site and the take-over by Thecla as patron of the holy place and consequently of the town. But the association of evil and the outside mountainous terrain continued. In addition, one of the two pagan professors using the sanctuary as a rest centre attributed his improved health to various elements, including Sarpedon but without mention of Thecla. Duality continued to exist.

The brigandage and externalised crime were pinpointed and personified in a handful of miracles. The third in the text shows the reader the marauders of a small hill town, Kietis, forced to offer a hostage to guarantee their future peaceful behaviour. The crime is highlighted by the description of the hostage herself. She was elegant, cultured, delicately sensitive to the heat. Her son inherited her virtues, and was said to have related the tale to the author himself. Thus the contrast was emphasised, the incident made tangible for the audience and a point against lawlessness made. At the celebrations of the saint's festivities it was youths from Eirenopolis who caused trouble among the gathered crowds of the faithful. They were punished mercilessly for their temerity and lust.[41] The bishop of Tarsus, more elevated in the church hierarchy, was shown to be less exalted than Seleuceia's because he lacked the support of a local patron saint.[42] The covert squabbling between the sees ended in the death of the unsupported metropolitan, "seen" in a dream at Seleuceia.

There were internal problems too. Locals under the saint's protection, like those of John the Almsgiver, were prone to corruption. Two council officers were responsible for distributing grain to army troops stationed nearby. When one died, his partner embezzled heavily, and committed also the offence of cheating orphans out of their inheritance.[43] Common theft was another city problem. S. Thecla, like Symeon, could see into the hearts of all and so detect the stolen goods in their hiding place as well as the thief. The case of rich trappings stolen from a society wedding received the most attention. The

ceremony is revealed as a lavish display for social and business associates.[44]

Other internal problems included famine and animal disease. Eye-sickness was also prevalent as it was at Alexandria — another city with a nearby estuary and marshes. Marital disputes also found their place on the list of examples. Two wives had to suffer the shame and neglect of spouses occupied with a mistress elsewhere.[45] Both cases are described in considerable detail. The first wife was saved by divine beautification. The husband, a great military commander, then found her more attractive than the mistress and returned home. The second wife was facially disfigured by her rival. The wrong was redressed by a divine intervention causing reversal of the malady. There are several lessons to be learnt here. The equation of visual beauty and desirability is obvious and denotes values other than those in which modern society would take pride. Others have already been mentioned. (Ch. 2)

Such social problems were commonplace perennials in any society, but Basil also found it necessary to draw attention to the religious situation. Seleuceia's population included pagans and Jews. The latter are referred to as accepted but not acceptable members of the medical profession. The pagans were also connected with the cultured classes. The pagan professors were an example. The exclusiveness of the connection Basil seems to have set out to disavow. The pious hostage, the author, the saint herself, all emerge as cultured persons of a good classical education. A socially expected divergence between holiness and learning, adopted by some modern scholars such as Festugière, must have existed strongly enough, in Seleuceia at least, for Basil to have found the counterblow necessary.[46]

The saint is shown to be able to improve the social position of her clients, as well as their health, through the working of a miracle. Basil himself was helped with speech-writing for her feast-day and at the synod. He was also encouraged in writing the text of the miracles and cured of earache.[47] This could be attributed to "vested interests", but the case of Pausikakos cannot. The lowly ferryman, of the class of poor manual workers, was cured of an eye complaint. Subsequently he was deemed to be on a footing with the illustrious, and his job became an honourable service for all Seleuceia.[48] The language is emphatic enough to make the point indelible in the minds of the audience.

So we move on to the life of Theodore of Sykeon. Village tensions, agricultural hazards and conflict with ancient rural beliefs render this source comparable to the lives of S. Nikolaos and of Symeon the Younger. Theodore's own background was remarkable for a saint, and his mother is the first outstanding character of the text. The pious heritage or high birth of most saints were both absent. Instead, Theodore had an itinerant imperial messenger as father and a courtesan for a mother. Family life was supplied by the various female relations engaged in staffing the hostelry.

Theodore, like the live saints in sources examined earlier, had powerful friends. The nephew of Emperor Phocas remained a personal friend and benefactor even when Theodore and the emperor were at loggerheads. When Phocas was replaced by Heraclius, the saint protected the nephew against possible vengeance.[49] The patrician Photius, later the exarch at Rome, persuaded the

saint to baptise his child — as also did Heraclius.[50] Unlike Nikolaos, Theodore did not alienate the regional authorities or the church hierarchy, even when holding a bishopric himself. Instead, opposition came from the well-established forces of pagan magic, from sorcerers and witchdoctors. An early attempt to poison him was only averted by a speedy retreat to the monastery and recourse to the icon of Cosmas and Damian.[51] The uses of the monastery are further exemplified in the career of one of its pupils. After illness and a period of "useful" suffering, he was cured by the saint, and, following a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, progressed to the status of hermit and stylite.[52]

A later encounter with a sorcerer is also recorded. This one was a cleric as well — evidence that forbidden arts and a respectable career could go hand in hand.[53] In contrast to those described in the last source, the clients of Theodore are rarely presented as acquaintances of the saint or accorded intimate descriptions. One or two incidents involving particularly praiseworthy or culpable persons, however, do obtrude. There was, for instance, the monastery archdeacon sent to Constantinople to purchase silver vessels for the new chapel. From the gold- and silver-smith he obtained a "polluted" article, a prostitute's chamber-pot.[54] It is not entirely clear, bearing in mind Theodore's own parentage, whether the article was rejected because of its past use or past ownership. It does, however, demonstrate the financial success of prostitutes and also that there was as yet no set tradition for the form of ecclesiastical ornaments.

So here we have Theodore's array of individual encounters recording family background, aristocratic friends and contacts with emperors, combat with superstition and heresy. Intentional or unconscious revelation of interesting items by individualisation figures little in this source. Even when the saint miraculously freed a prisoner from his chains to enable him to receive the Eucharist, the opposition came not from high authorities but from the petty officer in charge, and no official rebuke is recorded.[55] Other names appear, but the part they played as individuals was less important than their representative capacity. In this way we see "good" emperors paying respectful homage, dutiful bishops bearing gifts and grateful city elders electing the saint to a bishopric. This last honour rested uneasily on Theodore's shoulders. We see him, for unspecified reasons, buckle under the strain and resign twice. (cf. Ch. 4B)

Finally there is the fragmentary evidence contained in the sources making up the small "sub-group" of Festugière's Moines d'Orient. For these more easterly and less urban saints the evidence is often scanty, although saints and their backgrounds — mainly aristocratic — are described. In this section it is incidental information rather than the friendships or animosities which dominate the scene. Hypatius, for instance, was visited by a wealthy deaconess. (cf. Ch. 2) She was well educated and free to travel. She also thought herself competent to "test" the saint in matters of orthodoxy.[56] This may be taken as an indication of many people's attitude to saints before and during their establishment.

Euthymius and John Hesychaste, the others in this group with whom I am chiefly concerned, also received interesting visits from distinguished ladies. A deaconess with her nephew, a grandissimus, visited John. They were on pilgrimage to Jerusalem: an indication of mobility. In spite of obviously high

connections, the deaconess was not allowed into the sanctuary because of her sex. Greater discrimination in Palestine than further west in the empire is a possible interpretation. The nephew, an adversary in the sense that he was heretical, was converted to orthodoxy — thus demonstrating the saint's gift of clairvoyance and his strength as an emissary of the true faith.[57] The visit of empress Eudokia to Euthymius was less personal, more a formal representation of liaison with the imperial family in their traditional role as public philanthropists.[58]

Theodosius, another saint in the collection, met imperial opposition from Anastasius. As usual, the cause was oppression of the church. Care is taken by the hagiographer to clarify the point that the saint is not opposing the imperial institution as such, but seeking to correct the repressive policy of an individual "bad" emperor.

This brings to a close the observation of individual case histories of saints and their clients or opponents. In spite of the difficulties of finding and imposing the criteria the amount of the evidence upholds the existence of an issue to be examined. The force of, both local bias and of the author's personality and aims made themselves felt. The argument should be considerably strengthened by considering this chapter in parallel with those following.

3. The Saint as an Individual. Before turning to these, however, one final aspect deserves consideration. The introduction mentioned the dual role of the saint. He personified the expected powers and virtues in the institution of saintliness, and he was also an individual. It seems appropriate to give some consideration to the latter here.

The individuality of "dead" saints, as shown in their response to people and situations, was determined by the hagiographer. The reader is left with the author's character and the strength of its influence. The finest example of this is Basil, the Bishop of Seleuceia. His writing of the miracles of S. Thecla appears from this point of view a masterly and often subtle narrative, designed within a local framework to transmit a strong message for civic unity and righteous orthodoxy. Other saints in this category are also endowed with differentiated characteristics.

The "live" saints, recorded by contemporaries and disciples, were less manipulable but still liable to biographical interpretation. Their home background is normally recorded in detail. The parents were mostly pious and upper-class. Some, like the Almsgiver and Hohn Hesychaste, were of the highest aristocracy, which may have facilitated their good relations with the powerful figures of church and state. Less well-connected saints such as Nikolaos and Symeon the Younger may have had their relations with the powerful adversely affected for this reason. Background as well as the demands of local circumstance may have shaped the saint's preferences among clients and his responses to various social groups. Saints varied in the amount and degree of individual attention meted out, and the recipients vary too. The evidence arranged above argues that the reasons governing each case conform to recognisable patterns.

If the client was represented to the audience as an individual for the purpose of making the text more convincing, it follows that the saint should have a personal side. The degree to which the individual character of the saint comes through the structure of the text and the ritualised portrait of him, varies.

Though he was of the supernatural, an element of humanity was always essential for genuine contact with the local population.

4. Summary. Summing up the evidence presents us with a complex framework within which to work. Firstly, it must be assumed that the cases are deliberately pre-selected for the purposes of the author. Following from this, it may be observed that the cases fall into the three major but not mutually exclusive categories already described. Local difficulties were often common to several of the sources, although others were peculiar to one in particular. Nikolaos' confrontation with the concerted authorities and the separation of external violence from internal mishaps at Seleuceia are both unique. Clients of the saints seeking all kinds of aid — material, medical, advisory — are represented. Similarly, social, religious, and political/legal opponents are all painted as individuals. No aspect goes completely unillustrated. The balance in any one source is not necessarily equitable — Symeon the Younger and Nikolaos seem particularly beset with problems, whereas Daniel, once established, appears singularly well placed in the balance of local powers. This disequilibrium may be deliberate on the part of the biographer and dependent on the message he wished to convey.

Each source examined in this way has much to tell about local conditions and demands. To learn more about the saint's relations with his chosen community, this chapter should be viewed in conjunction with those which follow, concerned with the saint and his relations with local institutional forces.

NOTES

1. John the Almsgiver, para. 12, p. 219.
2. S. Daniel Stylite, paras. 26-8.
3. ibid., paras. 31-2.
4. ibid., para. 65.
5. Cyrus and John, para. 56.
6. S. Daniel Stylite, paras. 29,31,33.
7. Cyrus and John, para. 62.
8. ibid., para. 30 (see also 39).
9. ibid., para. 12.
10. John the Almsgiver, para. 9, p. 204.
11. ibid., para. 14, pp. 223-4.
12. ibid., paras. 15-16, pp. 225-7.
13. ibid., para. 37, p. 245.
14. ibid., para. 27, p. 237.
15. ibid., para. 10, pp. 216-18.
16. S. Daniel the Stylite, para. 51.
17. ibid., para. 49.
18. Symeon the Younger, paras. 3-4. cf. John the Almsgiver, paras. 1-4.
19. ibid., paras. 87, 120. It should be noted that in the second of her appearances on this mission, Martha added another potent plea to her argument. She asked Symeon to request mercy for his birthplace and fellow-citizens. This incident will be discussed in the ensuing chapter, but it is interesting here that the mother, while knowing the strength of her influence, still chose to back it up with a call to Symeon's civic sensibilities.
20. In passing it is worth pointing out the lack of attention paid to the law governing the lower age limit for monastic recruits.
21. ibid., paras. 1-40, in particular paras. ,14.
22. ibid., para. 233.
23. ibid., para. 231.
24. ibid., para. 161.
25. ibid., para. 221.
26. ibid., para. 151.

27. ibid., para. 208.
28. ibid., paras 202-4.
29. ibid., para. 211.
30. ibid., para. 130.
31. ibid., para. 144.
32. ibid., paras. 180-1.
33. S. Nikolaos, paras. 52-3.
34. S. Thecla, mir. no. 21-2.
35. S. Nikolaos, paras. 28-30.
36. ibid., para. 21.
37. S. Thecla, mir. nos. 1 and 25-6.
38. S. Nikolaos, paras. 7, 11.
39. ibid., paras, 44-8.
40. ibid., paras. 45, 40, 59.
41. S. Thecla, mir. nos. 18-19.
42. ibid., mir. nos. 13-14.
43. ibid., mir. no. 20.
44. ibid., mir. no. 5. See also Ch. 2.
45. ibid., mir. nos. 4, 28. See also Ch. 2.
46. See bibliography, Festugière, Les Moines d'Orient, vol I, part (i).
47. S. Thecla, mir. no. 16.
48. ibid., mir. no. 7.
49. Theodore of Sykeon, para. 152.
50. ibid., paras. 154-5.
51. ibid., paras. 37-9.
52. ibid., paras. 45-8.
53. ibid., para. 159.
54. ibid., paras. 40-2.
55. ibid., para. 125.
56. Moines d'Orient, vol II, part (i).
57. ibid., vol 3, part (iii) Ch. XXIII-IV.
58. ibid., vol. 3, part (i) Ch. XXX.

CHAPTER IV: THE SAINT AND INSTITUTIONS

SECTION A: SECULAR INSTITUTIONS

Introduction

Difference of individual and representative presentation re-stated

1 Method

Two sections: secular and ecclesiastic institutions. Institutional value of the saint

1.2 City groups (as before)
Division of institutions: political, social, professional

2 Evidence

2.1 The state: imperial and local government and the officials

2.2 Social groups: aristocracy, bureaucrats, mercantile, artisans and the poor of the crowds

2.3 Professional groups

3 Summary

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SAINT AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

SECTION A: SECULAR INSTITUTIONS

In the introduction to the previous chapter a division was made between two kinds of saint-client encounters. The first type was that in which the clients' individual character was crucial. The second was that in which the predominant function of the client was to represent a group. Chapter Three examined the first of these and discussed possible reasons for the selection of cases. Following the same lines, this chapter examines cases of the second type of encounter.

1. For reasons of convenience, the survey is split into two sections. The first deals with the secular institutions and groups, including those with social class or professional bases. The church and religious institutions are examined in the second section. This includes a sub-section which aims to analyse the institutional vale of the saint.

1.2 As before, the sources are considered in two groups according to the city to which they are related. The institutions or groups are divided up as follows: (i) the state, local government and its officials; (ii) class groups, from aristocracy to merchants, to the city mob; (iii) professional groups. Comparatively few of these are represented; doctors and scholars are examples of those which are. A certain amount of overlapping is inevitable.

2.1 The State The head of state is an appropriate starting place. Relations between saints and emperors appear to conform to a predictable and ritualised formula. Emperors were designated "good" or "bad" by hagiographers according to the orthodoxy of their faith and their treatment of the church. Their personality was separated from, and secondary to, their office. This latter division had the advantage of allowing hagiography to hold a "bad" emperor culpable for any adverse state of affairs without recognising any inherent conflict between the saint and the state. Theodore of Sykeon and the remoter Theodosius both supported the orthodox church against repressive emperors. In Theodore's conflict with Phocas it is significant that the emperor represented chaos.[1] The triumph of righteousness, good order and the saint were made synonymous. Saintly support was double-edged. Constancy on the side of righteousness gave Daniel the power to oppose and insult Zeno's usurper with impunity. He even entered the city and dared to utter the name of of the exile, prescribing it as the name for an unborn child of an aristocratic mother.[2]

This event was one occasion on which the decision to enter the city was made unilaterally by the saint in a time of troubles. In other instances, a saint's progress into the capital was only at the invitation of "good" emperors,

sometimes acting in unison with the p atriarch. The reasons for which saints and emperors visited each other must also be explored. Unlike ordinary clients' , emperors' visits cannot be called material aid-seeking, (cf. Ch. 3 Intro.) for such help would have been considered beneath imperial dignity.

Other members of the imperial family and court were healed by saints - but this normally took place away from the cult-site.

Advice and arbitration were a different matter. Emperors sought these when they were available and close at hand. The saint was ideally irreproachable, accessible and supposedly impartial - though this at least was, as will be seen, decidely questionable. Aloofness made arbitration at all social levels possible for the saint. Daniel even had to preside in an international case when the emperor Leo and the King of the Lazi sought his help in this capacity. [3]

Emperors' visits to saints in their sanctuary-sites were normally more of a social affair, a public demonstration of continued concord between God' s chosen representatives on earth. This constitutes a good reason for the absence of contacts between emperors and " dead" saints with whom such a public show was impossible.

A saint' s blessing was a public sanction upon the governmental deeds of the emperor. It would be naive to suppose that either party was unaware of the advantages of an occasional ceremony of this type, both for themselves and for general morale. It was too useful a relationship to be unexploited. Leo' s words to Daniel after the near-destruction of his pillar in a storm can leave little doubt as to the true imperial opinion of the matter. Daniel was urged to take better care of himself. . . . " for God has given you to be fruitful on our behalf. " [4]

On other occasions the audience was treated to the sight of Leo prostrating himself before Daniel and Heraclius promising Theodore to forego revenge against personal enemies and asking a blessing upon his Persian campaign. [5] In both cases it was the emperor who took the initiative. The same was probably true of invitations issued to the saints to enter their city. They were invited to do so only when they were needed, either in a famine or during a crisis of confidence in the ruler. This point may be illuminated further when we consider the relations of saint, government and city mob. (see sect. 2.2). It is noticeable that no saint is recorded as having refused such an invitation once it had been publicly issued. The presence of the saint was a demonstration of concord. In quiet times it was propaganda, in times of trouble it was reassurance and hope.

2.12 Below imperial government came the local authorities and all their officials. These can be viewed both as an institutional entity and as a professional group. Either way, their contact with saints was both frequent and varied.

Both Daniel and John the Almsgiver drew their " friends" from the governing classes and from the aristocracy. (cf. Ch. 3 2.11). In Daniel' s case, his forays into the city were clearly divided between flurried and uncomfortable appearances for the masses and quieter exchanges with the δυνατοὶ

On one occasion he was rescued from the mob's pressure by one such gentleman, and on another by retreat into the nearby Studite monastery.[6] His chief contacts were with the court and its officials, however, and quite uninterrupted by the presence of any intermediate local government structure.

Relations with this type of bureaucracy can only be seen in action away from Constantinople. The opposition between Nikolaos and the combined local dignitaries during a famine has already been mentioned. (cf. Ch. 3, 2.2). Close attention should be paid to the terms in which the incident is related. On hearing Nikolaos' refusal to accede to their demands, the local governors of state and church sent the message that he had "become a great sycophant".[7] In other words, he was failing to fulfill his duties - as they perceived them.

Symeon and Theodore of Sykeon represented the opposite end of the spectrum, where local government and saint worked hand in glove to the advantage of both.

Nicetas, the imperial representative, has already been described as the chief contact and frient of John the Almsgiver. There were arguments between them, mostly on commercial matters, but the closeness of their working relationship was emphasised by the hagiographer. The following points are noteworthy: (i) the friendship was cemented by the baptism of Nicetas' child. One manuscript even makes them relatives. Whatever the truth of the matter, the image of state and saintly powers had been successfully welded for the audience's benefit; and (ii) the saint always gained the upper hand in their arguments. The Almsgiver's other encounters with the governing classes were with local officials, and were all considered in the previous chapter. (cf. Ch. 3, 2.11).

Also important to both Constantinople and Alexandria were the doctor saints. Both pairs of healers paid great attention to the local governing bureaucracy but had no contact with emperors. Bureaucrats were particularly prone to digestive and other nervous complaints. Discussion of this aspect belongs elsewhere (see Ch. 5), and here we need only record that their contacts with the healing saints were many, urgent and mostly friendly.

Symeon the Younger's contacts - like those of the second city group – were rather different. His problems were with the notables of Antioch and his main criticism was of their heretical and indulgent life-style, where individual highlighting was used by the hagiographer. (see Ch. 3). But (apart from the religious deviance inside the city) there was another dimension to Symeon's ministry. Local government in rural areas impinged on all the saints of the second city group, as well as on Symeon, in the form of hierarchical village authorities. The divine aid sought in these areas was mainly arbitration in disputes and miraculous intercession or largesse during famine or drought. Here the saint provided a service for client and overworked authorities alike. The finality of his judgement also waived the possibility of appeal and reduced loss-of-face for both parties. Consequently the rural hinterland life was less likely to be disrupted for long. In this sense the saint was an agent of regional government and a go-between for city and village administration. Both Symeon and Theodore of Sykeon were active in this way. Nikolaos, noted already for his confrontation with the combined might of civic dignitaries, presents another facet of the responsibilities of this position.

His refusal to co-operate with the authorities was due to his insistence on staying outside with the famine-struck farmers.[8] The names of certain villages recur in the source - and in others, presumably for added authenticity. Their elders and citizens also sought the saint's advice and aid on problems such as infertility, famine and in disputes, as well as for exorcism.

S. Thecla at Seleuceia also provides interesting information through contact with the local governing class. In her class, the "contact" was figurative, as she - alone among the saints of the second group - was "dead". The interpretation was also coloured by the fact that the hagiographer was the local bishop and therefore had his own interests to consider. The bureaucrats were numerous. On the whole the "presence" of the saint was a positive aid to them, and the miracles showed them off to advantage. Examples are the much-quoted wedding ceremony (cf. Ch. 1 and 2), the "noble" hostage (cf. Ch. 2), and the cure of the notable's horses at the miraculous spring.[9] Two miracles, however, disrupt this picture of idyllic harmony. One was the case of the council member who abused his responsibility for conveying the grain rations to the nearby military troops. (cf. Ch. 1). The other was the curious instance which the saints prevented from being placed in her sanctuary.[10] A freindship pattern relating the bureaucracy, aristocracy and episcopacy was thus revealed. It also has something to say of attitudes to death and to the sanctity of traditional sites. Ordinary men's corpses were soiled in death as holy relics could not be. To bury them in a sacred location was to pollute both it and relations with the saint. The aura of restful sanctity of the site is described by the hagiographer, and was apparent to people other than the saint's primary devotees. For instance, a pagan professor was sensitive to it and attributed his cure to this, amongst other beneficial factors.[11] Only one worker of Seleuceia appears, as well as a motley crew brigands and sinners from outside the city. Otherwise the balance is tipped heavily towards the local bureaucratic class with its aristocratic and professional associates and hangers-on.

Unlike Nikolaos of Myra, Theodore did not antagonise the combined powers of the Sykeon area. The προτίκτορες of Ancyra and the surrounding region were not disappointed in him when they requested aid in an epidemic. In return, the powerful citizens supported his election to his unsuccessful bishopric.[12] (see section B). He, like other saints, had illustrious friends and patrons. (cf. Ch. 3). The association with Phocas' nephew introduces another facet of relations between saints and δυνατοὶ (or the wealthy). This was the significance of the giving or exchange of valuable and/or sacred gifts. Saints were inhibited by tradition from accepting payment for their help. Accepting gifts, often in the form of valuable and holy objects to adorn the site, was a convenient loophole.

Theodore also had dealings with the rural administrators and elders of his region. On the whole their rapport was satisfactorily harmonious. He settled disputes as required. Nevertheless he rebuked a greedy προτίκτωρ for oppressing peasants, and intervened on behalf of a mistreated wife of a village proprietor.[13] Paradoxically, these actions were acceptable. While opposing individuals of the governing class, his action was in support of the defenceless, as traditional, biblical and philanthropic conventions demanded.

The same justification was true of his only truly inflammatory action. To free a prisoner from his chains against the orders of his military escort was hardly law-abiding.[14] But it was philanthropic and merciful. Further power was given to the argument by the fact that the release was demanded to enable the prisoner to receive the Eucharist. Against this no officer dared remain intransigent.

Hypatius' stand against the law was not such a minor matter. To conceal escaping slaves from their pursuing master, especially from such an august personage as an ex-consul, was both highly illegal and daring.[15]

Euthymius also veered from strict adherence to central government policy. His remoteness from the capital and proximity to harsh frontier reality dictated a more pragmatic approach to nomadic Arab populations. He baptised several Bedouin, and rescued a Saracen captain from captivity in the local bishop's hands.[16] He also allowed a tent-quarter for Saracens to exist around his site.[17] This was razed to the ground after his death, supposedly by "barbarians". But the reader may be excused for suspicion regarding the true origin of the attack.

Saints' reactions to frontier enemies were by no means universally calm and enlightened. Hypatius appealed to the ἱλλύστροι of Constantinople and was given substantial aid against barbarians and adverse conditions.[18] In Alexandria and Antioch the threat was less constant than in the "wild" but it was still real and potentially more devastating. John the Almsgiver had to negotiate with Persians over prisoner exchange. Symeon encouraged and aided Byzantine troops against Alamandouros, "the persecutor of Christians" with the apparition of a fire-ball. He also reported the victory in Antioch.[19] The all-or-none situation of a city facing an enemy in pitched battle did not breed the sympathy and easy-going contacts of the isolated and rural frontier regions.

The saints of the eastern fringe were also concerned with central matters to some extent, particularly with religious ones. For instance, they all vociferously condemned Nestorius. Euthymius epitomised their position. For all his Arab sympathies, he blessed the Domesticos of the Eastern armies for the forthcoming campaign.[20] In return he expected, and doubtless received, widespread publicity "back home". Some degree of participation in local administrative affairs brought real advantages.

2.2 Social Groups In their response to other social classes, the saints showed a comparable variety in their encounters. In Constantinople and Alexandria both "live" and "dead" saints concentrated on the δυνατοὶ. This included both the bureaucracy and the extremely wealthy and professionally influential. The healing saints had their energies most evenly spread over the social spectrum, although types of illness and the cures administered varied according to individual circumstances of the client. (cf. Ch. 5.)

Little attention was paid to the mercantile classes by the saints of the great cities — except John the Almsgiver. His efforts were directed against monetary abuses f all kinds on behalf of the downtrodden and of the expanding trade of the city. Nikolaos of Myra's biographer also chose to portray contacts between saint and seafarers in a favourable light. Taking into account their importance to Myra as well as the saint's bad relations with the authorities, the author's desire to identify himself with a local audience can be interpreted

as a well-advised political ploy. Apart from these examples, close contact with the mercantile classes would appear to have been unrewarding to hagiographers. Whether this was a sympton of actual alienation or only of mutual disregard and self-sufficiency, there is insufficient evidence to say.

The life of Symeon the Younger is one of the most diversely informative sources. He took action against Antioch' s moral decay with co-operation from an imperial judiciary, while at the local level he was abused by citizens of wealth and influence. This opposition was typified in several incidents. " Impious revellers" who had leisure to indulge in the learned but forbidden art of astrology were also adulterous and blasphemous.[21] (cf. Ch.1,2.21.) A magistrianos had to be overruled when the saint restored a child to life.[22] On another occasion a group of wealthy citizens mocked the saints. They were punished by the loss of their possessions. The individual incidents may have been petty, but together they added up to gruelling odds.

Few of the multitude of indidents can be said to relate to the interests of social groups not already examined.

Nikolaos' preoccupation with the Myra seafarers has been explained above. Another group which retained his interest was the rural village populations of his area. They were at the mercy of the climate as well as of the landowners and tax-collectors. The appearance of starving infertile couples, and villagers afraid of demons, punctuates the text as a reminder of prevailing circumstances.

In the miracles of S. Thecla most attention is devoted to the notables. Only one artisan-worker is mentioned. Even he was changed through miraculous cure into an "illustrious person." (cf. Ch. 1, 3.1.)

2.3 On the whole, artisans received wider and more favourable coverage than the mercantile class in all sources. A reason suggests itself for this difference. Artisans were an established, respectable group, bound by traditions and with relatively little social mobility. They ranged from wealthy perfumers and goldsmiths to petty craftsmen and semi-skilled immigrants from the country. But there was little chance of a basic change in broad social position. For the commercial mercantile class the change of fortune could be rapid and dramatic.

An understanding of the artisan is aided by an examination of the role of city and country crowds in hagiography. These were mainly composed of the artisans and " the poor" . The saint was one attraction which caused them to gather.

Symeon the Younger was attended by an habitual crowd of men, women and children who watched and waited for the miracles he " performed through his intercession" .[23] He found physical escape from them into tranquillity essential, and retired to a tent further up the mountain. Even this remoteness did not defeat the crowd, who " did not find him at the monastery and went up the mountain when they learned he was up there" .[24]

Inside the town the same element existed, and for them the saint held the same fascination. When Daniel entered Constantiniple, " everybody left what

they had in hand....and ran....to see the man of God." [25] His escape into the nearby Studite monastery was not kindly received by the mob. They threatened to burn down the chapel of his chosen sanctuary. Their view of his role was that he should, above all, be constantly available: "freely have you received, and therefore freely give". [26]

Such an audience was a potentially disruptive element, and the authorities were apprehensively aware of this. When Daniel urged a public display of penance and intercession for Constantinople's sins the emperor and patriarch refused, on the grounds that " the prayers of intercession would disrupt the people and spread sorrow in the time of a festival". [27]

Saints may not have relished the power of the mob, but its corporate presence served several purposes. Nikolaos in particular demonstrates how nurtured popularity with the common citizens could be used to maintain the saint's position in the balance of power. Sympathetic contact between saint and the lower social class groups in the course of his ordinary activities put him in a position to act as a monitor on the currents of their thought and actions. In this capacity he was useful to the government. He was a means to contact in the struggle to control The masses also gave an opportunity for a large-scale demonstration of sacred and secular philanthropy in action. This was a respected and expected phenomenon in Byzantine daily life — on both sides. The downtrodden approached the saint in the certain expectation of aid, " as it is accorded to the poor". Donors and recipients were necessary to each other, and both were enriched by the process.

Yet another interesting light is shed on relations between saints, established government and the mob by their respective attitudes to the public games. Hagiographers, again representing the "enlightened" view to a modern way of thinking, set out to cast such public entertainment in a very unfavourable light. Cosmas and Damian devoted one of their most carefully planned and involved cures to the hippodrome fanatic. [28] (cf. Ch.5, 3.12.) Hypatius also expressed a wish to see the Olympic Games discontinued. [29] In neither case can their attitude be assumed to have been in line with general public opinion — or with the wishes of the government in its methods of crowd control. Although the individual fanatic could be cured, hagiography's general influence on the popularity of the hippodrome was non-existent.

2.3 Professional groups Few professional groups are featured in hagiography, although several professional persons appeared as individual clients or opponents. (cf. Ch.3.) These latter were chiefly doctors or sorcerers, whose professional viability and local dominance were necessarily eroded by the presence of a local saint. Theodore of Sykeon narrowly escaped an attempt on his life by one sorcerer. [30] The tenacious and pervasive hold of the discredited and pagan but traditional force allowed even a country cleric to practise sorcery part-time. [31] Hypatius' struggle in healing was also characterised as being "against sorcerers and witch-doctors". The more rural surroundings of these cases indicate the environment in which sorcery usually, but not exclusively, survived.

Scholastics, lawyers and military officers fared rather better. Symeon warned two scholars against blasphemy. One he "liked", the other he specially sought out from his bath-house haunt where he was in the company of two

friendly ἰλλύστροι. Symeon also prophesied the rise of a local scholastic to patriarchal office.[32] Cosmas and Damian helped a country pedagogue seeking work as a tutor in Constantinople, in spite of his previous abusive indignation. Scholastics were regarded by hagiographers as being in a bridging position between socially and professionally influential persons and the saints. By contrasts, Seleuceia's scholars were often pagan. Thecla herself was highly educated and was friendly to pagan professors as well as to the grammarian with whom she exchanged Homeric quotations.[33] Basil's polemic was aimed at a world in which an ideological separation of learning and holiness still had to be dissolved.

Advocates received help from both S. Thecla and S. Daniel. The latter cured and baptised a lawyer's son, the child continuing to visit him when grown up. But the group does not enjoy portrayal across the full spectrum of sources. Legal action was notoriously slow and costly. John the Almsgiver attempted to reform the ecclesiastic courts to meet local needs, but hagiography did not emphasise the matter.[34] Free divine arbitration and justice which circumvented the problems of civil action posed no threat to the legal profession. The lack of attention to lawyers is, nevertheless, surprising.

Military officers found the saints' blessing upon their campaigns a boost to morale. Both Heraclius and an Eastern Domesticos were glad of the service — for themselves, their troops, and, no doubt, for the influence on local public opinion. Daniel's influence with the troops guarding Constantinople was such that the usurper Basiliscos complained that the saint had turned the city against him, alienated the army from him and insulted him with impunity.[35] (The order in which these items were listed was not entirely fortuitous!) There were other instances of saintly kindness to the military. Thecla made no attempt to punish an adulterous general, and she helped troops in danger of being cheated out of their grain rations. Cosmos and Damian agreed to the husband's terms when curing the wife of a provincial officer. (cf. Ch.5, 3.11.) Many other professionals and highly skilled artisans, such as a corporation stonemason, came to the saints with highly individualised cases. (cf. Ch.3, 2.13.) The examples given above represent only professional groups with a consistent response to and from saints.

3. The relations of saints and secular institutions throw an interesting light, hitherto unremarked, on the saints' position. The bias of hagiography in favour of the governing class reveals insufficiently examined aspects of both parties' situation and role. Summing up the remainder of the saints' relations provides a context for this very issue.

Saints and emperors had a complicated and formal rapport. Whereas "bad" emperors had much to lose, "good" ones had everything to gain from skilful manipulation of saints and hagiography. They were provided at once with a well-informed, balanced but conservative and patriotic source of advise and a medium for measuring and controlling the majority of the city population. The saint was also an expression of the emperor's public image and relations. He was a visible sanction or penance for the individual emperor to refer to in order to help maintain the equilibrium and protect the aura of the imperial office. Both were chosen representatives of God and were expected to act (and be) in harmony. Contact with and protection by the emperor for

his services were undeniably invaluable to the saint. They gave a powerful charisma while imposing limitations at the same time. The formality of the proceedings merely added to their mystique.

The governing class, the δυνατοί, provided most of the saints' "friends" and also most of their recorded clients. The types of contact correspond to the categories of aid defined in Chapter 3. In this they were unlike the emperor, who only used the relationship for advice and arbitration — however successfully.

The success of these operations was variable. A wholly urban or rural environment was that most likely to give a saint success. Where his attention was divided between town and country, there was tension, but it seems that the latter was likely to be the more successful sector. Nikolaos and Symeon both illustrate this tendency. Theodore with less of a definite dichotomy on his hands was more successful in maintaining ἁρμονία. A possible side issue influencing this was the social background of each saint himself. Most were of high rank and would naturally associate more easily with their social peers.

The lower half of the social scale falls into two distinct parts. The attention the mercantile classes received from — and, arguably, paid to — saints and hagiography, was slight. The mass of artisans and poor making up the balance of the population are, on the contrary, featured a great deal. In situations where the mob was a necessary ingredient in the balance of power, they appear more. Daniel and Nikolaos illustrate this — for different reasons. Both the poor and the artisans were well established in urban society and knew their limitations and deserts. They were both receivers of saintly benefactions, whether in the shape of formal philanthropia or not. Through this they enriched both the narrative and the ethos of φιλανθροπία — and themselves. The various groups of professionals featured mainly as friends or opponents of saints. Ecclesiastics and bureaucrats, although professionals in their own right, were important to the study in the context in which they are treated.

Each group mentioned had reasons for interplay with saints. Gain was mutual, and the degree of success variable in these interactions, but their continuation was invaluable and vital to both parties.

SECTION B: THE ECCLESIASTIC INSTITUTIONS

Introduction

Wealth of information and factors common to both sections

1 Method

Divisions of the topic for easier comprehension into personal, physical and spiritual matters, and the institutionalism of the saint

2 Evidence

- 2.11 Relations with the higher clergy
- 2.12 The lower clergy
- 2.13 Deacons
- 2.14 Monks and assorted hermits, etc.
- 2.2 Attitudes to the physical possessions of the Church
  - 2.21 Buildings
  - 2.22 Commercial interests
- 2.3 Attitudes to the Church's spiritual attributes
  - 2.31 Sacraments and ceremonial
  - 2.32 Public morals and behaviour

3 The saint as an institution

- 3.1 Background and training
- 3.2 Site, establishment and activities

4 Summary

SECTION B: THE ECCLESIASTIC INSTITUTIONS

The information hagiography offers on the ecclesiastic institutions is both more detailed and more concrete than that concerning their secular counterparts. Many characteristics connect the two sections, but the division is helpful to the organisation and comprehension of the topic as a whole.

1. The consideration of the material falls into the following sub-divisions concerning the saints' relations with the ecclesiastic establishment: i) relations with ecclesiastic personnel; ii) attitudes to the physical possessions of the church; iii) attitudes to the spiritual attributes of the church. Finally, saints are examined to determine the extent to which their contact with other institutions affected their behaviour both before and after " recognition" .

2.11 The Clergy The higher clergy' s relations with the saints had many affinities with those with the secular δυνατοί. Relations between saints and patriarchs may be regarded as the third side of a triangle formed by these two powers and the emperor. They were also circumscribed by formulae. " Good" or orthodox patriarchs could count upon saintly support when the church was persecuted or repressed by the state. When the state was in good hands, this alignment was less straightforward.

A saint could counsel a patriarch, especially, as Theodore did, at the beginning of his office. Symeon had a stronger hold over one such incumbent whose election he had prophesied. But the relationship was ambivalent. Theodore of Sykeon was invited to Constantinople by emperor and patriarch acting together. They were also able to accept his resignation from a bishopric while a local superior refused to take the responsibility.[1]

Daniel, however, was on the doorstep of power. His presence within the immediate sphere of the patriarch' s influence made the situation between them more delicate. Short of an heretical controversy, they could not be seen to be in conflict. But there were many subtle trials of strength. There was the question of which of them should address the bless the crowd. The patriarch endorsed the emperor' s refusal to order the public mourning and intercession advised by Daniel. More complicated still was the question of Daniel' s ordination. The patriarch unwillingly performed the task and only at the emperor' s insistence. He was only permitted to mount the saint' s ladder after completing the sacrement.[2] Leo, by contrast, always had access to it. As with the emperor, it was not a question of equality. The two parties were different and could not be measured against each other. In the face of opposition from outside, there was immediate unity, but when opposition was lacking a subtle game of one-up-manship was played.

The regional metropolitans and bishops featured frequently in hagiography. Their relations with saints varied from hostility to close co-operation and were influenced by such factors as distance from the capital and the particular brand of the local balance of power. Bishops, like patriarchs and emperors, were not candidates for material or medical aid, but they did seek saints' blessings, and, like wealthy and influential secular persons, they gave rich and religiously significant presents.

In the first group of cities, John the Almsgiver presents an interesting combination. He was both saint and Alexandrian patriarch, and by virtue of his powerful character and his office, his firm control was unchallenged. Nicetas, his only possible rival in power, was represented in submission and co-operation with the saint on secular matters. John's case is even more revealing when compared with other saint-bishop relationships, especially those of Theordore of Sykeon.

In the life of Symeon, mention of the higher clergy is conspicuously absent. A bishop who opposed the saint at a distance was concerned as much, if not more, with a local priest who had set up a healing site with the aid of a lock of the saint's hair.[3] This bishop was won over eventually and impigned little on Symeon's other activities.

In the second group of cities, relations were equally diverse. At Myra the bishop joined the archon and eparch in violent hostility to Nikolaos. He too had been disappointed in the saint's performance of his "duties". Basil's relationship with S. Thecla was a harmonious one and his achievement gives some idea of a bishop's (and hagiographer's) greatest expectations of a saint. He had little opposition from the "dead" Thecla who could not retaliate against his manipulation. Basil's interpretations is therefore somewhat one-sided. He saw Thecla as patron not only of Seleuceia and its citizens, but also of his office and the individual holding it. She was his shield against toothache, inarticulacy and loss of face in his quarrel with the metropolitan of Tarsus.

In contrast to John the Almsgiver, Theodore of Sykeon failed to sustain the tasks of saint and bishop simultaneously. As he was not apparently lacking in determination, reasons for his failure must be sought elsewhere. The other bishops who appear in the narrative suggest an answer. The see of Germia was not far away, and the bishop there was on excellent terms with Theordore and sent him gifts.[4] The metropolitan of Ancyra was grateful to the saint for help in a famine-crisis. But although he could influence the city's dignitaries and citizens in favour of Theodore's election to a bishopric, he could not assume sufficient responsibility to accept his resignation.[5] Bishops' sees were small and in close proximity, conferring little real absolute authority and power on their holder. This fact, combined with the duties attached to the office, made Theodore's position as a minor bishop untenable.

2.12 The lower clergy were denied not only power and responsibility, but also money and often education as well. Hypatius went so far as to call rural clerics stupid by nature. Symeon had to reprimand a village priest for "lack of faith", and John the Almsgiver fought corruption among his lower clergy with ingenuity and determination. He saw the root of the matter to be low wages, which encouraged acceptance of bribery. This situation he tried to improve — with only mixed success, as his biographer wryly recorded.[6]

This not altogether equitable position made for very mixed feelings between the lower clergy and saints. While some of the lower clergy feared erosion of their position by saints, others reacted better. One, travelling in the company of a monk, had the presence of mind and sufficient faith to throw a souvenir icon overboard when threatened by a storm.[7] Village priests held a position in the local hierarchy but inside cities their social role was less well defined. The saint could be both helpful and frustrating to them.

There was a great gulf between higher and lower clergy, politically, socially, and economically. The closest parallel in the secular sector would be the artisans. They approached saints for the same reasons and their treatment in hagiography was on much the same level. It was not influenced by a need to give a public demonstration of harmony with saints.

2.13 Between these two branches of the hierarchy were the deacons. They lacked all the disabilities of the lower clergy, although their actual position was not overwell defined in law, or elsewhere. Attempts to limit their privileges had been to little avail, as hagiography makes only too plain. Their relations with saints were usually socially pleasant and profitable. Virtuous deacons were cured rapidly by the healing saints, one with "unprecedented speed".[8] Their position in society was not such as would debar them from seekingmedical aid with success. But there were misunderstandings and abuses. Cult-sites were far from immune to all-pervasive class stratification and privilege and the point was emphasised by the existence of the "stratum diaconum" at Symeon's sanctuary. Corruption is mentioned in conjunction with deacons in John the Almsgiver's life, and is corroborated by the same link in the text of Andreas Salos, and by Korykos epitaphs.[9]

2.14 Although not socially definable like most clergy, monks and other assorted religious personages of Byzantium also found saints to be a mixed blessing. The Studite monks found their own sanctuary in danger when they rescued Daniel from the eager Constantinople mob. Monks too had been the first group who actively sought to dislodge him. They complained to the patriarch that he was unorthodox and spoke Syriac, and that "all the world goes to him and we in consequence have nothing to do."[10] A sanctuary and cult-site - even if, and perhaps because, founded on monastic lines - challenged any local establishment already in existence as a tourist and pilgrim attraction. Inside another monastery, a fellow monk found the young Symeon a disturbing cause of jealousy, and attacked him.[11] The fear of rivalry from a charismatic holy individual in the vicinity was often groundless. Saints did not intend to eclipse monastic communities. Their own followers often formed a new establishment, or the saint might attach himself to an existing centre, such as S. Sabas' community, which made a home for John Hesychaste for many years without any sign of conflict between them. Other monks showed reverence for Theodore of Sykeon by painting his portrait for inspiration in their monastery. John the Almsgiver also showed himself a benefactor to monks when, after a misunderstanding over a fellow-traveller, he provided a hostel for them.[12]

Fringe elements such as hermits, ascetics and even other saints appear in the sources. Their relations with the saints seem to have been invariably friendly and mutally respectful. Ritualistic feet-washing was accompanied by advice from a visiting hermit, leading to Theodore's decision to resign his bishopric.[13] The encounters are recorded in rather more formal terms than contacts with ordinary monks and mortals. However much friendly inspriation was derived from the meeting, it was between two solitary figures with their own aura.

2.2 The Church and its Material Possessions Evidence is less plentiful on the question of saints' attitudes to the physical possessions of the church.

A saint struck two enemy soldiers dead when they attempted to loot a chapel.[14] This regard for ecclesiastic property and buildings was perhaps natural in saints who accumulated round them buildings for followers and visitors, chapels and the trappings for conducting sacraments and miracles. Daniel had such facilities provided by Leo, who even built himself a small palace in order to be near the saint. Symeon's biographer spoke of a monastic settlement and even of a "lower monastery."[15]

The trappings which were acquired had to untainted. Theodore of Sykeon rejected a silver vessel for his chapel because it had previously been used as a prostitute's chamber-pot.[16] (cf. Ch. 2, 5.3).

Collecting relics was another way of accumulating property, Daniel received relics of Symeon Stylites during his lifetime, and "holy children" were among the remains incorporated into the complex of his tomb.[17] Theodore of Sykeon's gift of a gold cross from the grateful nephew of Phocas (cf. Ch. 3, 2.2) was enriched by the precious fragment of the true cross added to it by the bishop of Germia.[18] Additions like those to the cult-site enhanced its reserve fund of holy power as well as acting as a strong attraction to pilgrims and visitors.

2.22 These growing establishments and the inmates they attracted necessitated the setting up of basic servieces. Nikolas of Myra followed Christ's example and miraculously fed a crowd with loaves and fishes - but more regular sources had to be established. The result was land-holding and cultivation. Vineyards, grain crops, herb gardens and orchards are mentioned, but other needs could only be served by regular and long-distance commercial supply, for which monasteries employed ναύκληροι and their ships. John the Almsgiver not only indulged in commercial speculation on a large scale, but his activities also throw light on ecclesiastical shop-keeping. (cf. Ch. 1, 3.1).

2.3 The Church and its Spiritual Attributes The saints' attitudes to the spritual attributes of the church appear no more innovatory or revolutionary than those to the church's material possessions. Church ceremonies, sacraments and conventions were respected and even reproduced. The church reciprocated with ritual on saints' feast days. Such was the Seleucean extravaganza celebrated and recorded by Basil.

2.31 For reasons which have already emerged above, saints were often involved in the baptism of the offspring of influenctial persons. Other sacraments feature in hagiography as well. The right to administer sacraments was important to saints and was dependent upon their own official ordination. Through this they could ordain their followers, which was a strong attraction to recruitment. One ordinand even refused the ceremony from his bishop and preferred to be ordained by Hypatius.[19] The ritual of the last rites was meticulously observed by saints and hagiographers. Celebration of the Eucharist and ceremonial blessing was essential. The ritualised process of confession and communion was the link between the orinary orthodox citizen and his God. The saint was particularly well qualified to hear confessions. His gift of "seeing into the hearts of men" removed both the possibility of concealment and the need for embarrassment. In addition his proximity to God gave him

great power in intercession. This particular combination of powers was only found in the ordained saint, which increased his attraction as a confessor and celebrant of the Eucharist.

One sacrament not actually performed by saints was marriage. There can be, however, little doubt of their attitude towards it. It was in itself an institution supported by the state, the established church and the saints. The form and content of marriage have been exhaustively examined already. (cf. Chs. 1 and 2). Saints helped redress abuses such as wife-beating and found solutions for adultery, but nevery advocated change in the conventions of matrimony which permitted such lapses, and they sanctioned the continuation of sexual inequality. Cosmas and Damian arbitrated between a suspicious husband and his wife, and a tumour patient was " more sick in soul than in body" because his marriage was unsolemnised.[20] Legitimate Christian marriage and procreation were advocated and facilitated by saints in every way.

2.32 Saints' support of the institution of marriage indicates their attitude to conventional public moral behaviour. In promoting standard mores, saints were aiding in the projection of harmony of purpose between state and church. Byzantine ideology demanded continuous expansion of population. Marriage and child-bearing were therefore desirable. Saints and the divorce laws upheld the social belief that infertility was a cause for shame and soul-searching - particularly for the woman.

But they key to the saints position as guardian of public morals was his power of public and private intercession. This was the last resort when transgressions had occasioned holy wrath. The fire and attendant scourge of Constantinople occurred because both emperor and partiarch ignored Daniel' s recommendations. The same incident illustrates the saint' s dual function in civic morality. They were a public early-warning system. Hurried atonement could have averted the worst results of the city' s sins. How this safety-valve operated at a personal level is discussed elsewhere; here we see it transformed into public insurance policy.

3 The Saint as an Institution The previous points make an examination of the saint in the same way both necessary and valuable. There are two stages to be considered: (i) the background and training of the saint; (ii) their activities after they were " established" . The pattern of this development with respect to saints' reaction to site, disciples, an audience, reveals the stength of the institutional.

Traditional public expectations as well as the vicissitudes of individual circumstances strongly influenced the issue. Only " dead" saints escaped the need for close social definition by their hagiographers. Most were above the " comfortable middle class;" John the Almsgiver and John Hesychaste were of the highest provincial aristocracy. Theodore of Sykeon and Symeon were unusual in having, respectively, illegitimate and artisan (if respectable) birth. John Hesychaste had also a more varied career background than was usual. He had been in imperial service as soldier and magistrate and had a nine-year episcopate behind him when he sought tranquillity in the community round S. Sabas.

The more usual path to a saint's life was through lengthy and rigorous training. Outstanding piety and strength of character were usually expected to manifest themselves in prospective sants at a tender age. For the necessary discipline and training in asceticism, the monastery provided the best and most convenient facilities. Of this part of the process, Symeon the Younger's biographer gives a lengthy and detailed account. Symeon, like others, was under the special guidance of a remarkable tutor, in this case an abbot, who recognised and nurtured the prodigy's potential.[21] Laws governing the minimum age for monastic recruits seem to have been totally disregarded, except in the case of Daniel. He was turned away at first because the abbot felt he was not old enough for separation from his parents.[22]

When the saint had absorbed all the monastery could teach him, there came a period of individual trial and contemplation in the wilderness. This was done either alone or under tutelage of an established saint. John Hesychaste stayed with S. Sabas; Daniel went on pilgrimage to holy places and visited Symeon Stylites. Nikolaos of Myra also went on an extended tour of numerous holy persons and places after his confrontation with the Myra authorities. Gathering support and self-assurance as well as gaining inspiration through observation seem to have prompted these visits. The wilderness, deserts and mountains held particular symbolic significance. (cf. Ch. 6). The time corresponded also to Christ's temptation in the wilderness. Saints' strength was tested against demons and wild animals. Daniel, for example, fought off demons from a deserted chapel,[23] but more extreme biblical parallels occur elsewhere.[24]

The next stage, the "formal graduation" of the saint, is again best described in Symeon the Younger. A vision at the end of his "apprenticeship" revealed an angel to anoint him and command him to use the power to heal and exorcise which he now possessed.[25] Such lengthy training was circumvented by those who came to holiness later in life. But some time in a place conspicuously "outside" society and spent in obvious ascetic self-discipline was necessary for social acceptance in the pursuit of a serious saintly vocation.

A rapport with the secular and ecclesiastic establishment was another ingredient in this acceptance. Spectacular success in the fields in which the saint was expected to be qualified was also required. These had also to be broadcast - by word of mouth between friends and associates, and to the wider audience by hagiography.

3.2 The choice of a site was the first act in the establishment of a saint. Often the site had traditional (pagan) religious associations and was in an isolated position outside, but close to, the city in question. Symeon, Nikolaos and Theodore illustrate this tendency among "live" saints; Thecla and Cyrus and John, being "dead", had their sites chosen for them. Many saints practised at their home town. The location of Mt. Sion was revealed to S. Nikolaos in a remarkable fashion. It was to be a "second Jerusalem" and the community he was to establish there was prescribed and was compared to the metaphorical ship of state.[26] Daniel was directed to Constantinople as the "second Jerusalem!"[27] These epithets are they key to the idealised nature of mini-communities, usually monastic, which gathered around the saint. As a basis for ascetic training and discipline, monastic communities were

the saints' natural standby, drawn from their own experience. A second reason for a saint's disciples to follow this tradition was that a monastery offered the most convenient form of easy control and administration of a potentially explosive situation. A representative pattern of events would be those which occurred in Symeon's case. A group of clients from Iberia, who had been cured and had witnessed some of his miracles, "asked to stay with him...and practised the monastic life in the same building."[28] Some organised form of communal life was essential to accommodate inmates of such different background. Theoretically, the community was without the temptations and corruptions of the city and, therefore, closer to perfection. Jealousies and petty crimes as portrayed in the sources reflect the failure of the reality to keep pace with the ideal. Nevertheless such communities served one very important function by removing certain pressures from the city. Treatment of this point has to remain largely hypothetical since no statement of it can be expected. Nevertheless it is feasible that an alternative, though still imperfect, community apart from but visible to the city and in a well-defined tradition could absorb elements that had no place inside the urban society. A charismatic saint was one such element in himself. This alternative institution existing side by side with the secular and ecclesiastic ones, without rivalry, removed from the city and its institutions the pressure towards the change and reform arising from the need to accommodate all kinds of misfits.

4 Summary A summary of the points made in this section reveals a situation which was often paradoxical and strained. The saint, however much a lone outsider, was part of the fabric of secular and ecclesiastic society. His personal character and background governed the success with which he performed in this mutually dependent relationship. The demands imposed on him built up around his image the reciprocal powers and qualities from which he derived in turn certain immunities. He had no neat niche inside the established worldly hierarchies. At the same time he was fully cognisant of them and of the resulting relations between their members and his own role.

With the higher clergy many of the observations pertaining to the highest secular rank held good. Types of aid given, such as advice and blessings, and the publicity given to harmonious relations, were all comparable. From this level of the hierarchy also came most of the cases chosen for "individual" treatment. The number of bishops, comparable to that of bureaucrats, contributed to the emptiness of their position and to squabbles between them.

The gap between the higher and the lower clergy parallels that caused by the absence in secular society of this period of a more volatile mercantile class. Although there was litt separation between regular and other ecclesiastics in the Byzantine church, the former's relations with saints were more variable. The latter group were almost uniformly friendly. The lower clergy had much to complain of in their own circumstances and often begrudged the saints their position and rapport with the authorities, as well as their charismatic appeal to followers and crowds. The saint's role does not seem to have included acting as a bridge between the various ecclesiastic levels, except in occasional admonition of village priests who fell short of their expected duties. In this it differed from his role in the secular sector, where he had a part to play as a go-between for church and state, where he was useful in public relations of local realpolitik.

Circumscribed as his own position was by traditional background and demand, the saint's attitudes to the preservation of property and the status quo were predictable and aimed at stability. While he provided an alternative, he both promoted the ideals of society and aided it to persist in less-than-ideal form.

Society and its institutions benefited from the saint as both a conscience and a safety-valve. In matters of spiritual rectitude, arbitration and public behaviour, the saint, as an "impartial" outsider with special God-given powers, had more to offer clients than state or church. His position, dependent on his individual character, was strengthened by institutionalisation. The standardised training had a part to play in shaping the conduct of an established saint's affairs and relationships. Society and saint's interdependence was a guarantee of their continuity.

NOTES

1. Theodore of Sykeon, para. 128.
2. S. Daniel, para. 82.
3. ibid., para. 51.
4. ibid., para. 54.
5. ibid., paras. 44, 50, and Theodore of Sykeon, paras. 152, 163.
6. ibid., para. 78.
7. S. Nikolaos, paras, 52-3.
8. S. Nikolaos, paras. 52-3.
9. S. Thecla, mir. no. 22.
10. ibid., mir. nos. 20-22.
11. ibid., mir. nos. 25-6.
12. Theodore of Sykeon, paras. 62-3.
13. ibid., para. 150.
14. ibid., para. 125.
15. Moines d' Orient, vol. II, part (ii) chap. XXI.
16. Where secular administration was for any reason defective, therefore, a bishop exercised considerable authority. In frontier areas such a situation was more likely to persist than in a more urban situation.
17. Moines d' Orient, vol. 3, part (i) chap XV.
18. ibid., vol. II, part (i). Chap VI.
19. Symeon, paras, 186-7.
20. Moines d' Orient, vol. 3, part (i).
21. Symeon, para. 157.
22. ibid., para. 144.
23. ibid., para. 56.
24. ibid., para. 67.
25. S. Daniel, para. 73.
26. ibid., para. 78.
27. ibid., para. 41.
28. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 11.
29. Moines d' Orient, vol II, part (i). Chap XXXIII
30. Theodore of Sykeon, para. 37.
31. ibid., para. 159.
32. Symeon, paras, 233, 224, 202.

33. S. Thecla, mir. nos. 24-6.

34. John the Almsgiver, para. (ii) 4.

35. S. Daniel, para. 71.

SECTION B

1. Theodore of Sykeon, para. 77.

2. S. Daniel, paras. 41, 42-3.

3. Symeon, para. 130.

4. Theodore of Sykeon, paras. 71, 101b.

5. ibid., paras, 77-8.

6. John the Almsgiver, para. (ii) 4.

7. Symeon, para. 235.

8. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 88.

9. John the Almsgiver, para. (ii) 4; Andreas Salos, para. 107; Korykos, see bibliography.

10. S. Daniel, para. 17.

11. Symeon, para. 14.

12. John the Almsgiver, para. (ii) 24.

13. Theodore of Sykeon, para. 73.

14. Symeon, para. 131.

15. Thus far, archaeology has revealed only one.

16. Theodore of Sykeon, paras. 41-1.

17. S. Daniel, para. 92.

18. Theodore of Sykeon, paras, 129-130.

19. Moines d' Orient, vol II part (i), chap

20. Cosmas and Damian, mir. nos. 25, 32.

21. Symeon, para. 11.

22. S. Daniel, paras. 3 and 4.

23. ibid., paras, 14-15.

24. The most heavy-handed examples occur in the life of Andreas Salos.

25. Symeon, paras 40-1.

26. S. Nikolaos, paras 4, 11.

27. S. Daniel, paras, 9-10.

28. Symeon, para. 103.

CHAPTER V: PHYSICAL ILLNESS AND THE HEALING OF THE SOUL: METHODS OF DIVINE MEDICINE

Introduction

Healing the majoe occupation of saints
Why were saints involved in healing?

Hypotheses

i) social expectation
ii) traditional and successful, aided by propaganda

1 Method

1.1 Analysis of evidence:
i) illnesses — sources divided as previously
ii) cures — divided by category
1.2 Health — social preoccupation. The philosophy of a healthy mind and body

2 The illnesses

2.1 The first group of cities
2.2 The second group of cities

3 The cures

3.1 The categories
3.11 Medical, surgical, traditional or folk; diet and emetics
3.12 Psychological or shock; faith
3.13 Touch or symbolic; exorcism, resurrection; the use of biblical parallels

4 The process of healing

5 The social implications

6 Summary

CHAPTER FIVE

PHYSICAL ILLNESS AND THE HEALING OF THE SOUL: METHODS OF DIVINE MEDICINE

Byzantine saints were divided into categories by Delehaye in 1925.[1] The first two of these categories were (i) those saints almost exclusively concerned with healing; and (ii) the all-rounders. Looking at the second category in more detail, we find that the greatest proportion of their time too is taken up with ministering to the sick. Of Thecla's 31 miracles, for instance, some 40% are to do with healing. So, clearly, anyone interested in portraying the relationship of saint and society at this period must include this part of their work. Most of the sources used in this study fall into the second group. Only Cosmas and Damian at Constantinople, and Cyrus and John near Alexandria, qualify for the first category. Much of this particular chapter is concerned with these two sources, but the others are essential for comparison. The reason "doctor saints" were attached only to the greatest urban centres will be touched upon later.

The basic question is: WHY were saints involved in healing at all? There were, it is clear from the sources, a great number of doctors and even some sort of hierarchy or guild-type organisation. It is equally clear that their social status was high. They mixed with high-ranking bureaucrats and civic and imperial dignitaries. It was a mark of a man's wealth and standing that he had attended, or been attended by, physicians over a long period of time. Such an occupation — or pastime — required leisure and wealth on the part of the patient. Divine medicine for the poor would thus fulfil an understandable demand. But in poorer or remoter areas there was already an alternative answer in the form of wandering healers, iatrasophists and quacks of various kinds. Why then did the saints enter the fray? And why did the rich and influential form a large proportion of the saints' clientele?

The working hypotheses advanced are as follows:

i) that a social expectation of divine healing is apparent. Furthermore, that this is consistent with Byzantine society's conception of the saints' complete rôle;

ii) that divine medicine was a long-standing tradition, not confined exclusively to Byzantine culture, and was manifestly successful, psychologically and otherwise. The success rate, popularised by the splendid propaganda of hagiography and gossip, enabled it to continue.

1.1 The method adopted in this chapter is to divide the sources into city-groups as before. The division is strongly vindicated by the analysis of evidence relating to illnesses, which reveals interesting contrasts and comparisons. The same is true in considering the cures, although for

these a different division is employed. The cures are examined in categories as they appear in Figure II, but the division of city groups is still kept in mind.

1.2 First of all, the literacy and social preoccupation with health must be taken into account.

In the educational plans of both Plato and Aristotle physical exercise was held to be of equal importance to learning. Its purpose was to produce a sound body — the necessary counterpart to a sound mind. By the time of Plutarch the relationship of body and soul was formulated rather differently. In the De tuenda sanitate praecepta of the Moralia, we read that "the soul pays high rent to the body".[2] This is the ideology underlying the Byzantine preoccupation with health. "The body," Plutarch said in addition, "contained the best sources of healing in itself". Here he refers, of course, to the humours of which classical and medieval medicine held that the body was composed. When they were balanced, good order and health were the result. "Harmony causes beauty, and beauty is not concealed," wrote Sallustius,[3] to which Plutarch added the axioms that "health is not gained via idleness" and that excess of any kind was to be avoided. These sentiments were not confined to the classical or pagan world, as extracts from the sources demonstrate.

Thus we see a society believing (a) that the body is a reflection of the soul, or of the conscience; and (b) that health was maintainable by conscious effort and discipline. As a parellel, or perhaps an effect of this, preventive medicine was totally absent. The close interconnection of σῶμα and ψυχὴ is stressed in hagiography. This is to be expected, as it was the key to the saints' involvement and success, particularly in the field of diagnosos, intercession and absolution. It acted as a guarantee in another way. If the misdemeanours of the soul were reflected in the visitation of holy wrath upon the body in illness, access through the saint to explanation, confession, repentance and forgiveness was always available. If warnings were heeded, therefore, return to the path of righteousness was possible in time to prevent irrevocable damnation. Thus we find a client of Cosmas and Damian being promised good health in return for "a better life and good works".[4]

The same underlying optimism, based on knowledge of a just but ultimately merciful God, finds expression in attitudes to civic disaster. The Byzantine citizens in S. Demetrios of Thessalonika and those described in the life of Symeon the Younger were confident that when the wrath of God was satisfied and the lesson learned, the victories of the enemy, be it Slav or earthquake, would cease.

2. The illnesses. This section attempts to present and analyse the more factual evidence concerning the illnesses themselves. The graphs of Figure I should prove helpful in clarifying any obscurities in the textual remarks. My classification of the maladies is, of course, open to question and improvement from a medical point of view.

2.1 The first group of cities (Figure I.A). The two major sources are again the lives of Daniel the Stylite and of the long-dead Cosmas and Damian. For the purposes of this chapter the later source, the life of Andreas Salos,

apart from a few comparative points, has little information to add. Cosmas and Damian, later called the doctor-saints, differ from their western counterparts and even from eastern saints such as Artemios, who was specifically effective against boils. Any illness and a great many other complaints were brought to Cosmas and Damian's cult-site sanctuary. Access to the saints was at their church, inside the city, although on occasion they made their appearance elsewhere, under special circumstances. Daniel, on the other hand, was well outside the city, though within reach for political and other types of consultation. Both his semi-rural situation and earlier dates must be taken into account when comparing the evidence. Cosmas and Damian's recorded miracles span several centuries and reflect changing attitudes towards doctors and classical medicine as well as class barriers.

Again the connection of σῶμα and ψυχὴ was stressed and the expectation of help emphasised by marked indignation on the part of one client after initial lack of success had led him to believe the saints indifferent. The travelling pedagogue required not only bodily and mental cosseting but financial aid to stay in the city and find work:[5]

τῷ μὴ μόνον τὰς ψυχικὰς σωματικὰς ἀλλὰ καὶ χρηματικὰς θερατεύοντι χρείας.

Eventually all his desires were met.

The first thing that strikes the reader looking at the graph is the great variety of complaints in the records of both sets of doctor-saints. The illnesses are often named or described very precisely. This indicates a very high standard of medical knowledge on the part of the personnel of the sanctuary or cult-site. Whatever their alleged attitude to classical medicine, they seem also to have been well-versed in diagnosis according to its dictates. In other respects Byzantine sources differed from more ancient ones. There is none of the gruesome labouring of details of symptoms and case-histories involving ruminations on yellow and black bile such as are found in Hippocrates' Prognostics.

Comparing Constantinople with other cities through the evidence of Cosmas and Damian, we find a very low incidence of both demon-possession and unspecified illnesses. This reflects the point made previously about the greater variety of named maladies. Psychological and mental disorders are also separated from demon-possession, which suggests an awareness of a distinction lacking elsehwere.

Turning to other categories of illness, digestive disorders and tumours figured especially greatly in Constantinople; a possible cause was "urban stress". This probability is supported not only by the lower incidence of such complaints in rural districts, but also by the social bias which they display. Their proclivity for the professional bureaucracy and those most likely to be involved in governmental intrigue is marked.

By comparison, genetic disorders are little in evidence in the cases brought to either Cosmas and Damian or Cyrus and John. The same can be said of deformities. The withered hands and deformed feet which abound in the sources with less urban backgrounds are lacking in both Constantinople and Alexandria, where the number and variety of diagnosed diseases, infections and fevers of a serious nature bears witness to the expertise of the personnel in both cities.

In spite of many similarities, Alexandria, seen through the miracles of Cyrus and John, does have features distinguishing it from Constantinople. The high occurrence of eye complaints is the most obvious. Seleuceia's citizens suffered in the same way. In both instances the problem would seem to have been the nearby marshy estuaries. The classification of these eye complaints is more detailed in the Alexandrian source, where cataracts, trachoma and other problems are differentiated.

Finally, in considering the two major cities from the evidence of the medical saints, there is the thorny problem of demon-possession. The separation of possession from mental and psychological disorders has already been commented upon. In this matter, Antioch forms an instructive contrast. The incidence of demons in the miracles of Symeon the Younger is phenomenally high. Demons in Cosmas and Damian are always related to other, specified ailments, and are few and far between. A malignant Tumour troubling a lady whose physician is sceptical of the saints' powers is said to be caused through "an evil demon"; a paralytic's sufferings are "due to the enemy in battle with humanity".[6] The wording itself is indicative that the demonic is considered a mere agent of affliction, never equated with it. In Cyrus and John's patients the demonic element is again limited, usually associated with another ailment, and restricted to a certain part of the body. Thus a client with a foot infection "saw the evil demon leaving his foot" in a dream.[7] A demon appeared in a dream to the boy with a tongue deformity, prior to his recovery.[8] Of the man simply said to be possessed, the reader is told that he was courageous but resigned, and was liberated violently.[9] This last piece of information approaches closer to the spirit of Symeon the Younger and the remainder of the sources. Daniel was at war with the forces of evil in a similar way. Apart from the episode where he held a chapel against demonic siege for days on end, he exorcised a demon who appears several times in sick children brought to the saint. At his last appearance he came out into the open and reviled the saint for his divine strength, successfully employed against his own evil power.[10] This is a clue to the difference between the cities: the greater sophistication of the largest urban centres versus the naiver attitudes of the authors, clientele and audiences of the more rural centres. By this criterion, Antioch stands apart from the group in which its size would place it. As hinted in earlier chapters, it falls between the two groups distinguished here.

Some explanation of this may be found in the circumstances of the cities. Alexandria was near the scene of operations against the Persians. Nevertheless, commerce and life went on uninterrupted and orthodoxy was, at least for the purposes of hagiography, triumphant. The continuity of urban life is made apparent in the life of John the Almsgiver, from which, incidentally, demons are conspicuously absent. From the life of Symeon the Younger, however, we can see that Antioch was very different. The war against heresey and sorcery was by no means won. Abuses of all kinds were rife and Symeon's battle against them not crowned with the spectacular successes accorded to the Almsgiver. Not only did the saint wage constant war against these problems, but the emperor found it necessary to send an imperial judiciary to take the citizens and civic dignitaries to task.[11] Geographically, too, connections between Antioch and Constantinople were less easily maintained

than those between the capital and Alexandria, although the cities were no further apart.

In all these observations, no real attack has been made so far on the question of the function of the demonic. For the most succinct answer, we turn to another, semi-rural source. In the life of Nikolaos of Myra, the demonic is often personified with natural elements — the water of the well and the wood of the cross, which, the villagers adamantly maintained, "has eyes and ears".[12] Was this witness to a surviving pagan fear of nature spirits? Or fear of the unknown and inexplicable to which a label has been attached in order to familiarise and thus reduce it in stature? This explanation would tally with further encounters with the demonic in the same source. A particular instance brought to mind here is the story of a single sailor who braved the weather to secure a safeguarding cross to the mast. The resident demon who is, of course, responsible for the turmoil, vents his temper by increasing the storm. But the resourceful mariners surrounded, overcame and finally quenched the source of trouble.[13] The personification of forces otherwise beyond comprehension and control provided a focus for counter-efforts which, if concerted, could triumph.

2.2 The second group of cities (Figure I.B). Having already inevitably touched upon some aspects of the illnesses recourded for the second group of cities and sources, we must now sample the rest. Here the overall number of recorded cases and the alternative concerns of the local saint should not blind us to the fact that a proportional view of the figures is that which is likely to prove significant. The lack of demons at Seleuceia is only apparent because the author relates their activities exclusively to giving aid to marauding brigands and thieves. The responsibility for this rests with his own purpose of portraying the city as a haven of peace and order and exiling all lawlessness and brutality.

The occurrence of eye troubles, mentioned above, reached epidemic proportions in Seleuceia. The remaining category of illnesses to which attention must be directed generally is that of genetic disorders. The incidence of these is far higher in Antioch and the cities of the second group. Seasonal starvation and famine, seen most clearly in the life of Nikolaos of Myra, were spectres haunting the communities of the harsh Mediterranean seaboard.

Malnutrition in varying degrees must have been a constant companion and hazard. In addition, the village communities around Myra, Sykeon and Antioch are revealed as very in-bred. For amusement, gossip, and in more vital ways they had to be self-reliant. Outside contact amounted to quarrels with neighbouring villages, trips to the large regional town for market or other reasons, and pilgrimages to the saint. These factors in conjunction may at least be postulated as some explanation of genetic problems.

Further information about the occurrence of illnesses can be gleaned by merely looking at the graphs of Figure I. We have examined above the significant contrasts rather than every item of available information. In addition to the original propositions, therefore, must be added the following: that the contrasts should be interpreted in the light of other known details of the background of the city concerned, and are then found to reveal significant information relevant to the overall portrait of that city-community.

3. The cures (Figures II.A and II.B). Yet more information in this direction may be pieced together by an examination of the cures and the methods used in administering them. It is this upon which the hagiographer might be expected to dwell. Certainly the language is emphatic and repetitive, but technical detail is often surprisingly lacking. The categories and figures used in this section of the chapter will be clarified by looking at the graphs of Figure II. The length of time involved in the cure is also considered important and frequently mentioned in the sources. This does not appear on the graphs but will be discussed in more detail later.

3.11 The cases treated by medical or surgical means are mostly confined to accounts of the medical saints, in which hospitals are occasionally mentioned. One appears to have been situated at Ancyra, where the bishop sent an injured pilgrim.[14] John the Almsgiver, who alone performed no healing miracles in the usual sense, although he is described as the "true physician", provided lying-in and other hospitals for the poor and sick of Alexandria.[15] It is not at all clear whether the labour force manning these institutions was ecclesiastical, or provided at the expense of the donor or another philanthropist. This point is in need of clarification, but the sources of hagiography and ordinarily corroborative material are unhelpful.

Of this first category of cures, the great majority are medical rather than surgical. Fear of the knife persisted. This is not surprising, considering accounts of some of the cases. Professional doctors' experiments in this direction had to be corrected by saintly intervention in the case of one malignant tumour.[16] In others, gangrene set in and had to be averted by more timely interference. In another, a protective husband forbad even saintly surgery, and maize ointment was substituted as treatment.[17]

In considering cures which contain a traditional, herbal or folk element, there is what at first appears to be a paradox. That is, the only true occurrences of this type are attached to the two great cities. It might be expected that relics of this kind of medicine would linger longest in the country. It is possible that it did, but that it was practised more in the home, and then more as a matter of course than publicly. In the miracles of Cosmas and Damian we find a cordial of mint and squashed beetle-essence recommended for a bad pregnancy.[18] On another occasion the saint prescribed a humourous riddle as a cure. A palace official was told to drink in water the ground genital hair of Cosmas — that is, of Cosmas the lamb, a recent gift to the sanctuary.[19] The problems the patient had in unravelling the riddle can be left to the imagination, but other features are worth considering. Firstly, the dream-riddle format is reminiscent of classical oracles and of Old Testament prophecy from dreams. Sites of oracles had become centres of pilgrimage in the past — not only for seekers of advice, but for the sick as well. To a very great extent, the saint, with his powers of seeing into the hearts of men, of exegesis, clarification and prophecy, had consciously taken on the function of both prophet and oracle of pagan times.

Another aspect of this case needs to be emphasised: the use of the cult-site's mascot animal. As M. Hamilton pointed out in her excellent but little-used work, the instrumental rôle of the mascot or "holy" animal, normally smake or goat, at Asclepian centres of healing is well attested.[20]

Accounts of incubation are widespread in the sources.[21] The direct derivation from Asclepian methods is admitted. This is in complete contrast to any borrowing from Hippocratic medicine and the writings of Galen, which in almost all cases was denied most strenuously. Cyrus and John's biographer speaks of Hippocratic medicine as a "vitiating aid" in a case of a doctor attempting to cure ulcers.[22] A dropsy patient, it is stressed, is cured by divine medicine and NOT by that of Hippocrates and Galen.[23] The iatrasophist Gessios is carefully detached from his loyalty to the pagan tradition in a lengthy battle of wits and reasoning in which Cosmas and Damian are called in to help their Alexandrian colleagues.

Hippocratic medicine was that practised by the doctors. Although they were highly paid and mixed with the upper classes of society, doctors were very definitely out of favour in the saintly camp. From the safely removed focus-point of the cult-site, the hagiographer of Cyrus and John spits abuse and denunciations at the doctors inside the city and its social and professional structure. Their frequent ineffectuality is to be inferred from the numerous patients who despair in doctors' hands and resort to the saints. A deacon with a malignant fistula had been to many doctors over a considerable period of time. Before his cure, involving surgery and a dish of green olives, he had to promise never to attend a professional physician again. Another case, an unquenchable fever, was beyond the power of the chief doctors and sophists:[25]

ἰατρῶν δε σοφισταὶ καὶ ἡγούμενοι τὸ λαμπρὸν τῆς τέχνης ἀπάνθισμα.

Another client, with a heart condition, went to the saints when there was "no help left in man".[26] The element of desperation as an immediate precursor to seeking divine aid is often repeated. It will figure later in the discussion of the process of healing.

The doctors' feelings for the saints are not so predictable. In the miracles of Cyrus and John, little space is given to this side of the question. In those of Cosmas and Damian, however, several hints are given — not always consistent ones. On a number of occasions the saints intervened in a case the doctor was busily bungling. In one particular instance, the setting of a broken leg, the doctor's respect for the divine practitioners caused him to refuse to meddle further.[27] In the very next miracle, an irreverent doctor laughed at a patient who had dared to suggest that she should resort to the saints.[28] He threatened that such action would only make her worse. A man with an abscess on a tooth which threatened to spread to his ear was actually advised by his physician to try the divine alternative.[29] This did have mitigating circumstances. The physician knew his client well enough to say that the illness was "more in the soul than in the body". A fuller diagnosis by the saints revealed that this referred to the patient's irregular marriage situation. This had to be attended to before the abscess from which he suffered could be cured.[30]

In sources other than Cyrus and John's miracles, abuse levelled at doctors and Hippocratic medicine is less virulent, but is still present, at least by implication. Only in the very last section of Cosmas and Damian does the tone change. There, a monk, freed from unwarranted imprisonment, is sent to

a monastery for treatment for his sickness, "according to Hippocrates and Galen".[31] The dating of this last group of Cosmas and Damian's miracles, which are very different in social overtones from the rest, is argued convincingly by Festugière to be twelfth or thirteenth century. By then, social conditions and attitudes provided a different background. Constantinople had taken over from Alexandria as the centre for medical studies (outside the Arab world) — as has been pointed out by O. Temkin.[32] Divine medicine was no longer struggling against the classical pagan art: it had assimilated it.

Asclepian tradition, in contrast to Hippocratic, was not rejected. As stated already, the use of incubation and site personnel, including animals, was an established and recognised part of procedure. The hagiographer of Cyrus and John even goes so far as to term the sanctuary an "Asclepedarium", and the doctor demi-god is mentioned elsewhere in not unfavourable terms. The long tradition of healing at the site, "taken over" by Cyrus and John from Castor and Pollux, may well be responsible for this attitude. Dead saints were particularly amenable to "transportation" of this kind. They also had, or could easily be given, a legendary strength and effectiveness trimmed to meet local requirements. Such a connection with a "golden" past of martyr-saints was a matter for satisfied contemplation and an eternal thread of hope and encouragement in an introspective society which lionised its past according to literary tradition. Such an outlook could accommodate the rather more romantic and mystical methods of Asclepian healing, but baulked at the "scientific" aspirations of Hippocrates and Galen.

The continuity of the Asclepian tradition makes comprehensible another tentative point previously left unresolved. This is the question of herbal and folk-type cures being documented as urban survivals. An hypothesis which may be added to previous speculation is that such medicine was close to Asclepian method and so was recorded and remembered. Thus it survived in centres with such a tradition, rather than in remoter areas.[33]

The next category in this group of cures has some connections with the traditions of healing. A moderate diet with medicinal but not excessive amounts of wine appears standard traditional advice. Plutarch combined this with a rejection of cathartic or emetic purges of the system. Possibly he felt that they might interfere with the natural rebalancing of the humours — of which he believed the body to be most capable in itself. Divine medicine shows no such shyness. The favourite recipe for inducing such a purge seems to have been fetid oils such as the oil of cedar. This singularly unappetising medicine was the fate of the hippodrome fanatic and other patients of both sets of healing saints. The "violence of liberation" had a part to play in the psychosomatic feeling of relief which was well understood to be an important accompanying factor of divine cure.[34] In addition, and noticeably from the hagiographer's point of view, it made a far more satisfying and spectacular end to the tale.

Magoulias, in a pioneering article on saints and Byzantine medicine, written in 1964, points out the preference for vegetable prescriptions in curative medicine.[35] Olives, lentils, and mixed vegetable concoctions are those mentioned here. It is worth pointing out in passing that all the saints

followed some form of frugal vegetarian diet as part of their own ascetic training. Most of them were very long-lived — certainly they enjoyed more than the average life-expectancy.

Vegetables may well have been generally safer for human consumption than meat. An irascible sufferer from food and blood poisoning was full of indignation at delay — and demonstrated the importance of friends. His cure was to be effected by a cessation of his blasphemous indignation and of his eating poultry.[36] In another case meat was actually advocated as a cure — but chiefly as an inducement to conversion from Judaism to orthodoxy.[37]

To return momentarily to the subject of the patients' friends, Aelius Aristides made the most useful summary. He referred to those who continually helped and encouraged him as being in a "conspiracy of his friends and Asclepius". [38] Friends must have been invaluable for transporting the sick, giving them social and personal encouragement, and tolerating their demands.

3.12 The same humour and kindness are revealed in the next category of cures. Again they were mainly limited to the greatest cities, and, of those, Antioch was excluded. To some extent the figures on the graph are misleading in this case. Given the underlying theory of illness and cure in the society, every case had a psychological element, but those with an obvious and fairly sophisticated use of this type of treatment are very limited. The most interesting occur in Constantinople among the miracles of Cosmas and Damian. One was the hippodrome fanatic with an abscess. The oil of cedar he had to drink was simply an emetic, but the method by which he was persuaded to drink it was subtle. In a dream-vision he found himself in the beloved hippodrome. There the glasses of oil, by now increased in number to three, presented themselves for consumption. The officers of the watch then appeared to accuse the night visitor of black magic and the foulest forms of sorcery and idolatry. On waking, he gulped the required medicine, vomited and was cured — of both the abscess and the uncivilised and brutalising obsession.[39]

The second instance is more an example of straightforward shock treatment. A paralytic was ordered to lie down in what would be considered offensive proximity to a dumb lady-patient. After much mental distress and three commands, he did as he was told. The lady screamed loudly and, afraid of detection and disgrace, he leaped up and ran away. It has to be recorded that to satisfy the demands of conventional morality, they then got married.[40]

The category somewhat inadequately termed cures by faith-healing, or "unexplained" miracles, figures largely in all the sources. In the first group of cities the balance is better kept between these and the cures given some kind of logical explanation. This is more true of Constantinople and Alexandria than of Antioch, which is in line with previous findings. It should be borne in mind that a great number of the otherwise "unspecified" cures should perhaps fall into this category.

In many instances it is clear that healing by "faith" meant nothing more or less than a conversion from paganism or heresy to orthodoxy. Two clients in Cyrus and John's miracles, one a paralytic, one with eye trouble, turned

from despair to cure via orthodoxy.[41] The degree of faith also affected the length of time for which a patient was left to improve through suffering until worthy of healing. A poor man was deprived of his livelihood by illness, and cured swiftly because the saints "loved the poor and thought him worthy of healing". A particularly virtuous deacon who went straight to the saints when ailing was healed "with unprecedented speed".[42] The timing of the cure was seen to be of major importance. If the faith was sound and unshaken by misfortune, a swift answer could reinforce it as a reward. If faith wavered — and suffering was sometimes purposely prolonged to test it — the waiting period was made into a lesson. It was often portrayed and considered as a formative preparation, and the increased dramatic element made the final cure more stunning for the patient and the audience.

Only the exceptional client could get away without this part of the process. For the rest, the importance of a period of self-examination, leading to confession and repentance, is often stressed. This device appears frequently in the two main medical sources. A blind Roman had to agree to cease consulting professional doctors and then wait, paying for the fault, for eight years until deemed worthy of healing.[43] During this waiting period another patient was saved the embarrassment of returning to society by being commanded to serve in the sanctuary for some years. The social ramifications of such a case will be discussed later. There was another possible benefit of the period of "time out". It was a time of recuperation. When the last stage of desperate resignation was reached, aided by psychological stress and shame, a new state could set in. This was a state in which no standards were imposed upon the patient and a certain relaxation could be gained from total abandonment to "slumming" in the neutral territory of the sanctuary. This "eye of the hurricane" gave time for vital recovery in an otherwise crowded life where society's demands were formidable. From this neutral ground, after humiliation had done its worst — or best — there was only the way up again.

3.13 Many of the cures of a purely miraculous nature contain a large element of symbolism. This is mainly in the form of the instrument of cure, frequently holy bread or the sign of the cross. In addition, the use of symbolic or lucky numbers is a recurrent theme. Firstly, however, we must review the use of healing touch, which drew on a wide cultural heritage. Touch here means not only that of hands but also contact with garments and hair of the saint. Two instances of the latter kind of touch occur in the life of Symeon the Younger. Once, a piece of his tunic is effectively used in exorcism. Another time a hermit-priest begged a lock of saintly hair and set up a kind of healing relay station.[44] In areas where the saint was too far away or overworked, such a secondary contact was useful. It was also in line with the model set by the life of Jesus, to which each saint did his utmost to adhere. A different approach was through the icon. An army officer appealed to the icon of Cosmas and Damian on behalf of his bride. An icon was also instrumental in curing Theodore of Sykeon after the first attempt to poison him.[45] It provided a channel of access when more direct contact became impossible. The importance of the journey to the place of sanctuary was undiminished. Such a resort eliminated the formative period of suffering and of recuperation outside society's bounds. It was a second best. If the journey, which always gets a separate mention, were impossible, this was an alternative. Another was the occasional progress by saints to Constantinople or

other great centres. It is noteworthy that patients catered for on such occasions included a large proportion of government and court officials who might not otherwise have been free to reveal their problem or to indulge in having it treated.

The touch of the hand was usually accompanied by a blessing and/or the sign of the cross. There seems to have been no particular type of case in which this occurred, but it is found most frequently in the miracles of Cosmas and Damian.

Symbols are frequent but not especially emphasised in the texts. Presumably the audience was expected to be well attuned and receptive to references obscure to the modern reader. They include the use of numbers, liturgical devices such as holy bread, and, less obviously in this context, relics. The use of the sign of the cross, with or without blessing, is universal. The use of bread, particularly hot bread, is most common in the miracles of Cyrus and John, but occurs once also in the life of Symeon.

In the writings of Hippocrates (the Prognostics) it is stated that the fourth and seventh days are important in foretelling the outcome of an illness. In the cases brought to S. Daniel we are always informed of the patient's state at the end of one or two weeks. The prognostic significance of the numeral four was replaced by that of three. References to threes were frequent. Several of those already quoted here could be a rephrasing of "on the fourth day" as "after the third day". But there is insufficient evidence to say whether the connection was made, even in history. The use of three is in no doubt. It is stated most explicitly in a case of Cosmas and Damian's where an official turned up for healing from strange swellings with his wife and sister-in-law. The hagiographer actually calls the case a "trinity of healings".[46]

Further recourse to the symbolism of biblical example can be found. Saints' miracles of healing, as well as of feeding the poor, hold echoes of Christ and the Disciples' aid, particularly to lepers, the blind and the possessed. Nevertheless, there is an important distinction which adds to the value of an individual hagiographical tradition. The greater medical detail and the interest displayed in the social ramifications of affliction and cure are alien to the Gospels.

Relics, as symbols of the strength of dead saints, were accumulated by "live" saints. In the East, relics do not seem to have played a large part in healing on their own. Only when a saint died, did his sarcophagus continue to work the miracles expected of it and to draw pilgrims to the site.

Exorcism, following the pattern set by the occurrence of demons, was more in evidence in Antioch and the second group of cities. This is one field in which the saint inevitably triumphed over the doctor. Exorcism, as is made abundantly clear, was a matter of conflict between divine and evil powers. No doctor could match this. When Symeon was, as it were, commissioned at the end of his ascetic training, he was told that he had, and must therefore use, the power to heal and to exorcise.[47] This is neatly summed up by Gregory of Tours, who writes about Cosmas and Damian, "They dispelled the infirmities of the sick merely by the merit of their virtues". That

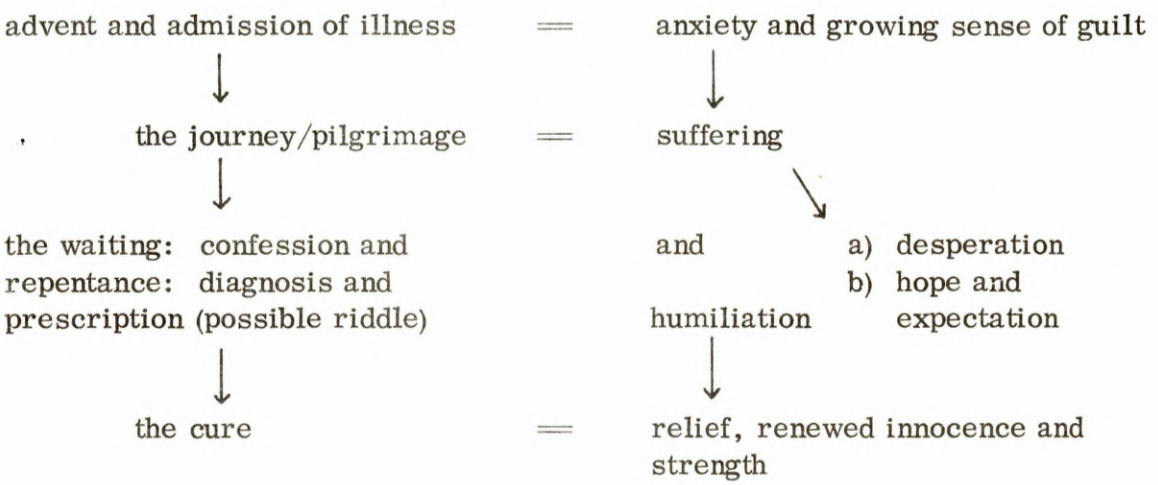
is, the saints healed and exorcised because of their powers to do so, not because they nurtured those powers in response to a need for them.

Looking briefly at the second group of cities, we find that little remains to be added. The pattern set by the observations concerning illnesses holds good for cures. A lower proportion of the cases brought to the saint was for medicinal aid in less urban areas, but the categories and their distribution reveal the same overall information as before. The figures are self-explanatory. Most of the deviating factors such as the apparent lack of traditional and herbal cures has been adequately discussed already. The use of symbolic devices is low, except at Myra and Seleuceia, where it may have depended upon the authors', particularly Basil's, classical knowledge. In Seleuceia there occurs also the only item of miraculous yet traditional healing, which is of particular interest in this group, i.e., the miraculous provision of the healing spring in time of pestilence among the livestock.[48] One factor which tends further to differentiate Antioch and the second group of cities from Alexandria and Constantinople is the occurrence of resurrection. One possible explanation depends on local medical expertise among the site personnel and the audience. Where expertise was of a higher level, resurrection might (a) not be necessary since the victim would not have been so quickly accounted dead, and (b) not be possible without overstretching the credulity of the audience. In other details this group is hardly remarkable. The timing or rhythm of the cures is again such as to allow for natural recuperation and thought. In rural areas both the sophistication of the treatment and the description of the cures are diminished.

4. The process of healing. For a fuller understanding of illnesses and their cures, two more facets of the topic must be considered. Both have been inevitably touched upon already. We shall now examine first the process of healing as an established ritual, and secondly the social implications of illness and cure, which necessarily form a background to the entire chapter.

The two factors are connected. The process of divine healing involved several stages. First there was the journey of humiliation. It was humiliating because it was a public admission of need, guilt and inadequacy. At the sanctuary there was the waiting period, during which diagnosis and suitable suffering took place. Full diagnosis and prescription required full confession and repentance. This stage was absolutely vital for the success of the cure. A group of Isaurians travelled to Symeon the Younger on pilgrimage for healing. They were blessed with the sign of the cross but remained uncured because they had omitted to confess.[49] Thus the hagiographer employed them to point out the moral. The contribution made by suffering towards worthiness was a device for adding to the dramatic value of the incident — a faculty well exploited by hagiographers on their audiences' behalf. In common with the self-discipline of asceticism, suffering had the virtue of strengthening character. Once the problem had been identified and explained, it could be isolated and eradicated. This process was common to both healing and exorcism — after it, thepatient could re-enter normal life and work, totally "cleansed". Theoretically he was also immunised against repetition of the same affliction. This is made clearest in the case of treatment for a jealous demon, against whom the patient was forthwith promised protection for the rest of his life.[50]

The whole of this process can be summarised in the following diagram, which it is hoped will be a profitable clarification for the reader.



5. The social implications. Illness was an interruption of life and work. That it was also, in varying degrees, shameful, is by now, I hope, apparent. But the shame was not evenly distributed. Illnesses which were socially handicapping or immediately obvious to the spectator carried a higher burden than other ailments. Those in social positions with most to lose were more easily shamed than those already considered "untouchable".

Infertility was an obvious candidate for consideration as a shameful illness. It interfered with the continuity of the family and with the duties of married Christian couples to procreate. As mentioned above, the social stigma attached itself always to the wife (cf. Ch. 2, 3.2). An indication of the despair infertility could bring to a man is contained in the cry of such an unfortunate in the more or less contemporary source, John of Ephesus: "I have no heir and no hope of my house".

Deformities, which include demon-possession, and deafness, dumbness and blindness also bore a heavy social burden of shame. For example, there is the deaf-mute lady of Constantinople, described as afflicted by "a shameful illness since she could no longer converse with others of her own kind".[52] It was the cutting off from one's peers that was so damaging. Another cause for the shame of deformity was that it was visible. When the daughter of the emperor Justin was possessed, the situation was especially critical. Imperial families had to be on public view:[53]

καὶ τοῦτο ἠσχύνουτο φανερῶσαι

Leprosy was another disease which involved social alienation. The reasons were good, but it was not only the risk of infection which counted. A previously popular soldier suffering from the disease had become unapproachable. His friends could not bear to be in his presence or even to look at him.[54]

A patient of Cyrus and John with dropsy and a growing tumour was called a horrible sight:[55]

οἰδήσασα τε ἐξαίσιον καὶ φρικτὸν ὑπάρχουσα θεαμα.

His cure was said to be a restoration to health and sanity, which may indicate the effects of social alienation.

Conversely, the results of participation in a cure by divine healing could be socially beneficial. Thus, a kind of status improvement is shown in the case of Pausikakos, the Seleuceian ferryman who became "illustrious" through his cure. (See Chs. 1 and 2) In less remarkable examples the miraculous intervention is regarded as merely "strengthening".

A different social aspect of the cure is the way in which it was individually "tailor-made" according to the patient's socio-economic circumstances. This is an extension of the saints' essential goodwill towards other mortals and also of their rôle as all-seeing spiritual fathers. A pair of miracles illustrating the point occur among Cyrus and John's cases, related consecutively for added dramatic impact.

Yet another social ramification of one person's cure was that it could achieve something quite different for another client. A wife suspected of being adulterous was brought for saintly arbitration by her husband. They were told by Cosmas and Damian that the milk of a pure woman would cure the eyes of another client, an official conveniently present at the same time. By the one miracle, the eyes of the third party were cured, the wife's reputation preserved and the face of a potential cuckold saved from social scorn.[56]

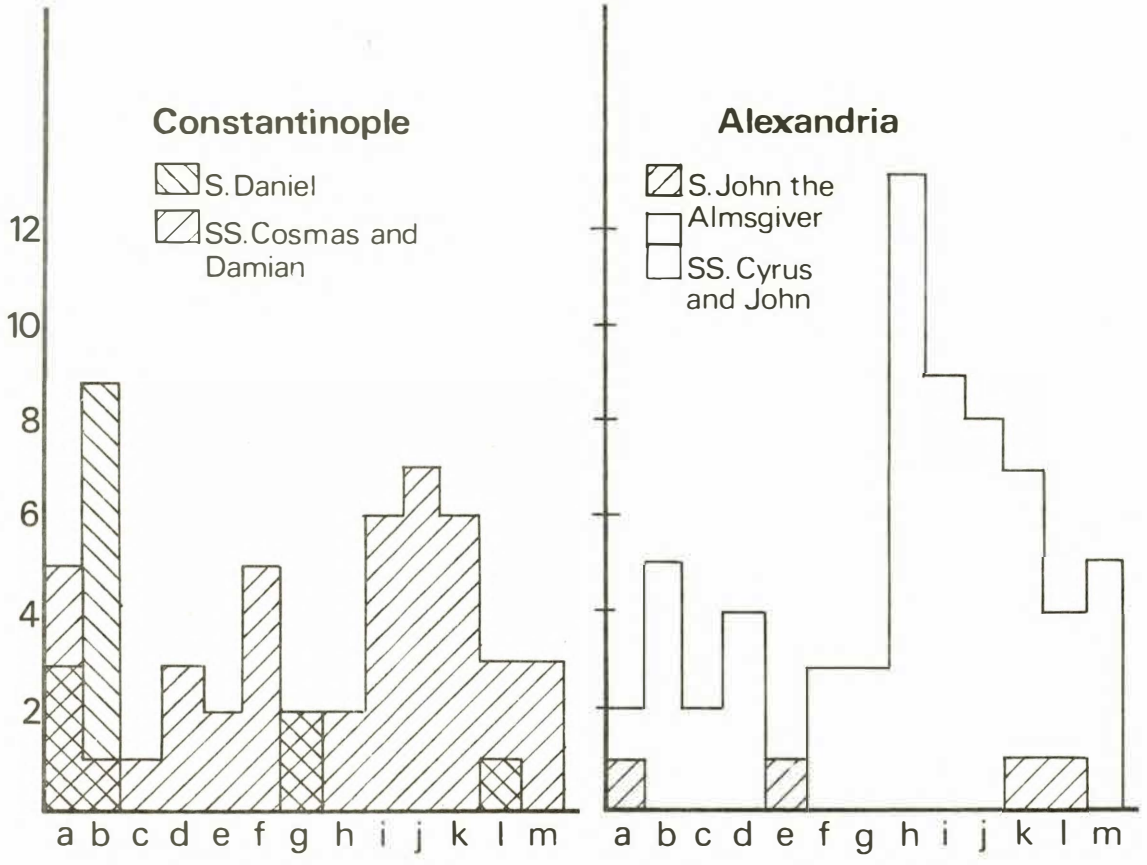
6. Summary. In summing up, a general reply to the opening question and hypotheses may be suggested. Healing was a part of the make-up of the conventional attributes of a saint. It was a power he was held to possess and was therefore expected to exercise. Expectation was supplemented by a certain social need and a great psychological demand for a channel for repentance, penance and the means to absolution. All these functions were given wide public appeal by an admirably arranged and broadcast propaganda. The process of such healing was formalised into a recognisable pattern, the completion of which was as much part of the cure as the prescribed medicine. This contributed to the lack of a development of preventive medicine.

The prescriptions of curative medicine borrowed much from classical and traditional methods; the scientifically learned portion of these which was used by the doctors, and thus posed a double threat, was considered unacceptable by the hagiographical camp. Asclepian methods, which were directly adaptable to the saints' sanctuary, and sufficiently mystical to satisfy the patient and the audience, were perfectly acceptable.

Examining the actual evidence of the illnesses and cures suggests a clear division between medical saints and the rest, and also between the requirements of the cities. Dubious sanitation and diet and urban stress as we know it today can be postulated as factors behind the figures for many categories of illness. Among these are digestive and genetic disorders, growths and deformities of various kinds, infections and epidemics. External injuries were mostly to be anticipated from travelling mishaps — outside the city.

The cures reveal in the same way as the illnesses the sophistication of the two greatest cities and their doctor saints. As they are the only locations with such specialist saints, this can be seen best in terms of supply and demand. The virulence of the opposition to the professional physicians resulted both from the rivalry they provided and from the greater threat from scientific medical studies, especially in Alexandria. The cures themselves cannot be assessed separately.

An appreciation of the ideology underlying the treatment of sickness and a consideration of its social implications is essential for any understanding of the saints' medical rôle.



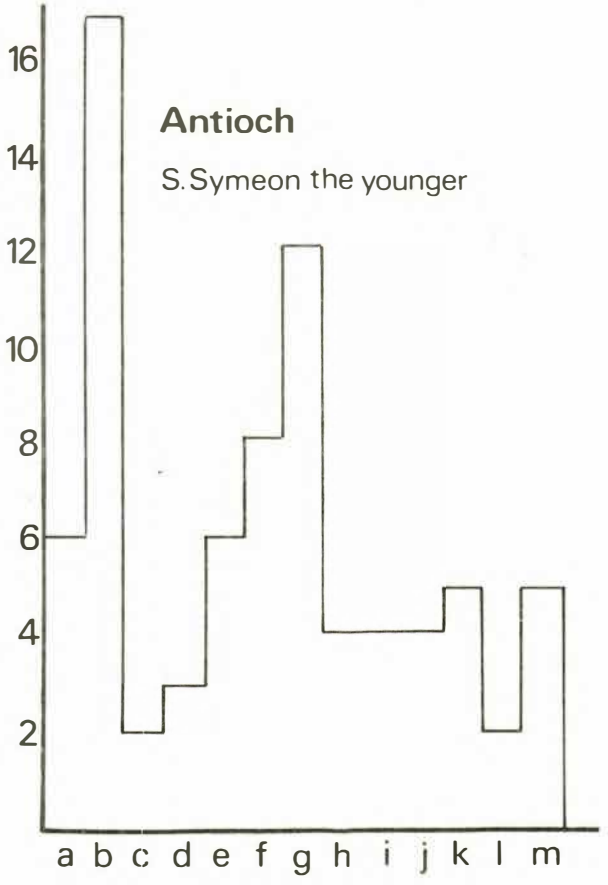


fig. IA
the illnesses

:see IB for key

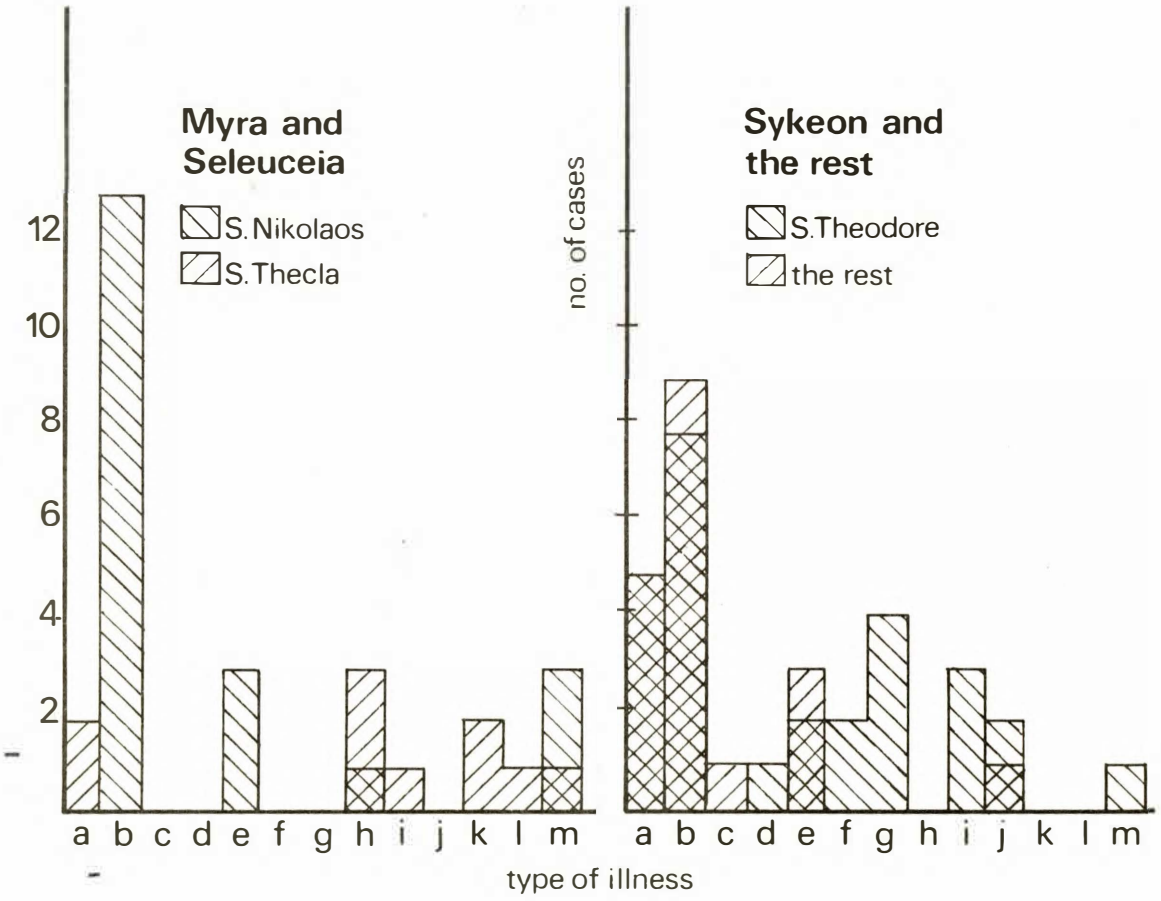


fig.1B

KEY:

a — unspecified
b — demons
c — mental disorders
d — digestive disorders
e — genetic disorders
f — paralysis
g — deaf/dumb/other deformity
h — eye complaint
i — leprosy/serious disease
j — cancers/growths
k — infection/epidemic
l — injury
m — other

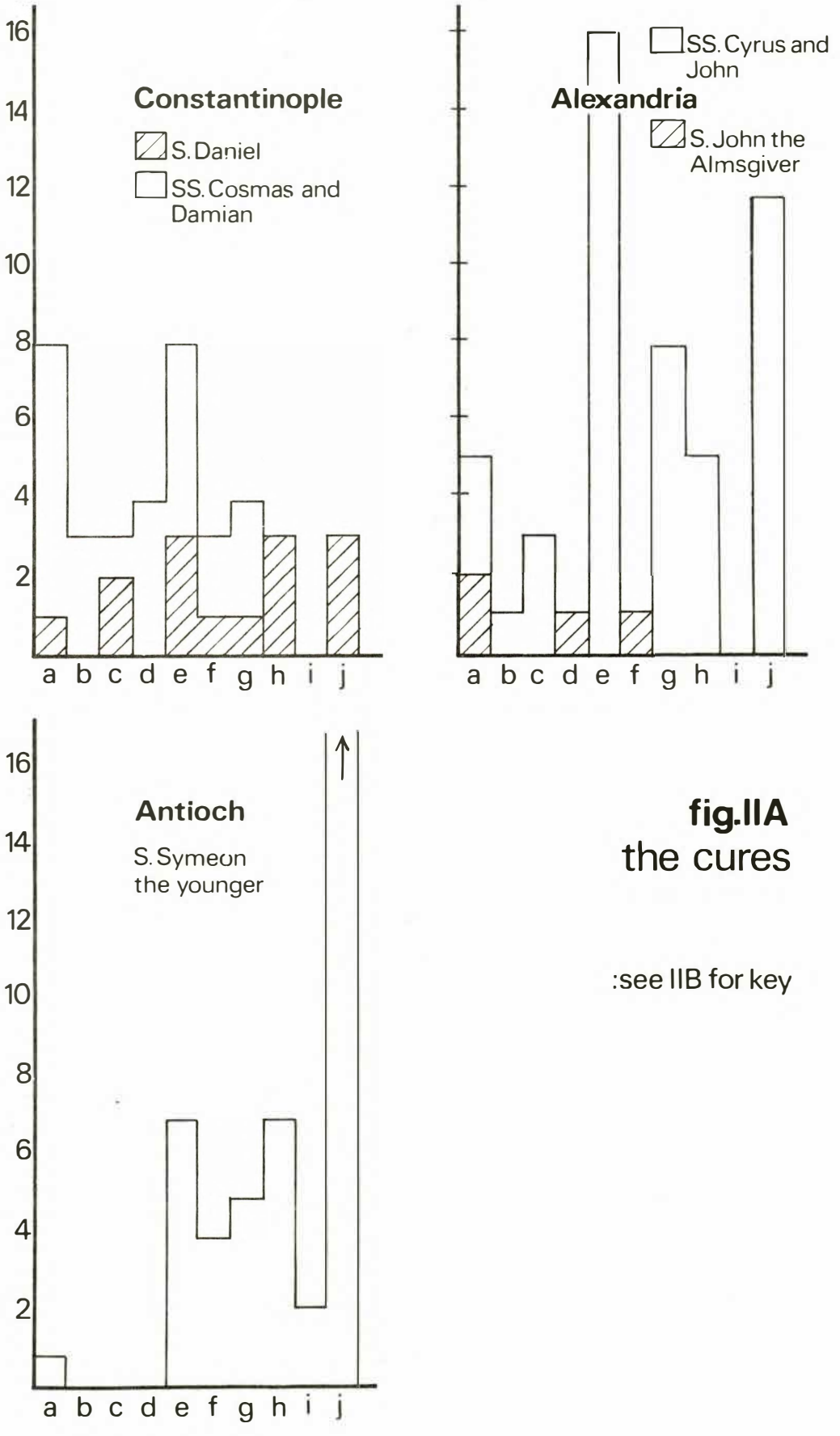


fig.IIA
the cures

:see IIB for key

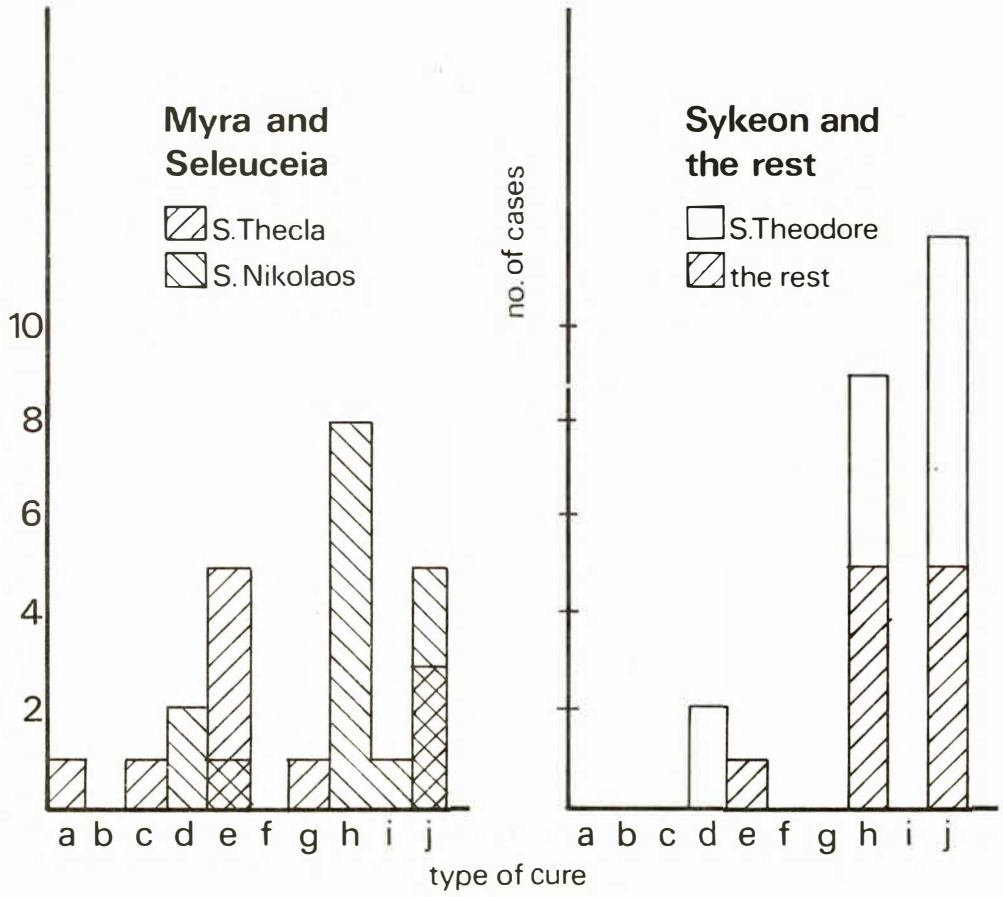


fig.IIB

KEY:

a — medical/surgical
b — folk/herbal
c — diet/emetic
d — psychological/ shock
e — faith
f — touch
g — symbolism
h — exorcism
i — resurrection
j — unspecified

NOTES

1. H. Delehaye, see bibliography.
2. Plutarch, Moralia, vol. 2, Loeb edn.
3. Sallustius, ed. Nock, 1926, Bk. VI. See bibliography.
4. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 37.
5. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 18.
6. Cosmas and Damian, para. 3.
7. Cyrus and John, para. 35. See also 36.
8. Ibid., para. 41.
9. Ibid., para. 57.
10. Life of S. Daniel Stylite, paras. 29, 31, 33.
11. Symeon the Younger, para. 161.
12. Nikolaos of Myra, paras. 16, 18, 20.
13. Ibid., paras. 30-1.
14. Life of S. Daniel Stylite, para. 87.
15. Life of John the Almsgiver, para. (i) 16, and 7.
16. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 5.
17. Ibid., mir. no. 13.
18. Ibid., mir. no. 8.
19. Ibid., mir. no. 3.
20. M. Hamilton, see bibliography.
21. The methods are described in the Sacred Tales by Aelius Aristides, and discussed by both M. Hamilton (1906) and Deubner (1900).
22. Cyrus and John, para. 15.
23. Ibid., para. 43.
24. Ibid., para. 30.
25. Cyrus and John, para. 80.
26. Ibid., para. 4.
27. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 27.
28. Ibid., mir. no. 28.

29. Ibid., mir. no. 32.

30. Ibid., mir. no. 21.

31. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 48.

32. O. Temkin, see bibliography.

33. Hippocratic medicine also incorporated herbal knowledge, which might partially invalidate this observation.

34. See particularly Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 11.

35. See bibliography.

36. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 6.

37. Ibid., mir. no. 2.

38. Sacred Tales, see bibliography.

39. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 11.

40. Ibid., mir. no. 24.

41. Cyrus and John, paras, 38-9.

42. Ibid., para. 56, and Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 38.

43. Cyrus and John, para. 69.

44. Symeon the Younger, paras, 42, 130.

45. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 13; Theodore of Sykeon, paras, 37-9.

46. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 16.

47. Symeon, paras, 40-1.

48. S. Thecla, mir. nos. 21-2.

49. Symeon, para. 188.

50. Symeon, para. 225.

51. John of Ephesus, Patr. Orient. 17. iv.67-70. Cf. Ch. 1, 2.1.

52. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 7.

53. Symeon, para. 208.

54. Ibid., para. 219.

55. Cyrus and John, para. 20.

56. Cosmas and Damian, mir. no. 25.

CHAPTER VI: THE SAINT AND CIVIC UNITY

Introduction

1 Method

- 1.1 Summary of points made in Parts I and II
- 1.2 Other issues arising — city groups
  - — language and symbolism
  - — alternatives and stability

2 Evidence

- 2.1 Part I
  - 2.11 Male rôles, career, family
  - 2.12 Female rôles, family, household, religion
  - 2.13 Values and education, lack of conditions for change
- 2.2 Part II
  - 2.21 Individuals, friends and opponents
  - 2.22 Institutions, state, church, social classes
  - 2.23 The saint as individual and institution
  - 2.24 Medicine and the demonic

3 Interpretation

- 3.1 Saints and convention, saints and the alternative society, their mutual dependence
- 3.2 Types of unity, optimism and utopia
- 3.3 Differences of location and time
- 3.4 Symbolism and the use of language
- 3.5 The hagiographer

4 Possible further investigations: the decline of the urban saint

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION: THE SAINT AND CIVIC UNITY

Certain common features have already emerged from the examination of aspects of the society and of interactions between these and the urban saints. Such common characteristics concern the structure of society and its internal divisions, and also the controls exercised within and exerted from outside, giving either continuity or change.

This last chapter aims to draw together the points and, with some inevitable reiteration, puts forward the arguments in support of the hypothesis that the saints functioned deliberately as an instrument of political and social cohesion. The emphasis on the purposeful nature of the saint's rôle raises other questions: for example, whether the active implied by "unification" is not a more apt than passive "unity", and what were the real interests of the hagiographers. These two questions are interconnected, the linking factor being the degree of collusion on the part of the Byzantine populace.

However faithful he was to the individual saint, his memory and the religious and ascetic principles which he represented, the hagiographer was in every case consciously aiming at a certain audience for certain reasons. He was, therefore, often open to the accusation of connivance with local and/or national authorities and their interests. This must be kept in mind and also be clarified through a review of the relevant points made in previous chapters.

In addition to this review, another slant is considered. The use of language and symbolism and emotive parallels has already been mentioned. Here it is examined more fully in the context of an attempt to pin down the rôle of the hagiographer and his relation to the society which produced both him and the saint. Considered together, these facets should provide sufficient coherent evidence to support a new view of the urban saint.

2.1 The persistence of the framework which governed male and female rôles and values bears witness to the lack of incentive for change in society, and this continuity was in itself one kind of unity. The daily social functions and life of Byzantine men and women had many aspects which touched upon the saints, even if they were not centrally concerned with them. For this reason hagiographers gave the readers many items of useful information, sometimes only loosely connected to the theme of the moment. The incidental nature of such items usually relieved them of the hagiographical bias found in most of the material. In the second section the treatment, particularly of saints' activities, was less haphazard.

2.11 The male rôle, like the female, was divided between family and society, but society and career were more separate from the family for the

man. At home his function was more one of a passive background figurehead with ultimate executive power which was, in most instances, administered by the wife. There were modifications to this division of power and labour. Vital decisions concerning the wife and mother herself were resolved by the peterfamilias, who also controlled the children's higher education and choice of career — at least for his male offspring. The sources provide ample illustration of an exemplary picture of dutiful and respectful youth. They show also the likelihood of a son's following a similar career to his father's, but this conservatism should not be over-emphasised because of the openings afforded to the gifted opportunist. Class considerations also had a part to play. Those at the top of the social scale with well-established professions had more to lose by attempting a different tack. In established artisan families also there were sound practical and economic reasons both for continuity and for apprenticeship within the family circle.

2.12 The separation between career and family for men left women dominant and unmolested in the household. Ideally, smooth running was thus ensured in both sectors. The man's career success reflected back on the family. The man made the major decisions for husband and wife, but she supervised budgeting, household personnel and the children. The high value attached to her competence in these areas and the concept of female virtues had changed little from Classical models, although the mother-child bond was stressed by Christian doctrine.

In the delicate realm of marital relations, the submissive rôle of the woman and discrimination against her in matters such as adultery had again changed little. The keeping of mistresses and physical abuse of a spouse were discouraged but not prohibited by active renunciation of law. In cases of adultery the woman was always portrayed as both the provocateur and the bearer of the shame attached. The solidarity of the family and of legitimate procreation were seen as socially desirable. Prostitutes did not pose a threat to this stability in the same way as mistresses, and prostitution was therefore a highly successful industry and was not discouraged, even by hagiographers. This same solidarity of the family was based on its internal hierarchy and was increased by the extended nature of the family circle, which included various relations and even their associates.

A further aspect of the female role in relation to both family and society was religious. Classical ancestor-worship had been transmogrified into a deep, instilled reverence for the family and its heritage. Responsibility for this facet of training is never definitely apportioned but certainly falls most easily into the female sphere. Following from this tradition was the female responsibility for maintenance of adequate family religious observance. The sources amply illustrate this in the form of care for the moral and physical well-being of both spouse and offspring. The emotional aspect of religion and in particular of the saint versus the established church is adequately discussed elsewhere, and bears significantly upon the topic.

2.13 The reasons for this separation of tasks were based on a concept of male and female attributes which is almost oriental in its dualism and its ramifications. This in turn reveals the crux of the matter — the division which was paradoxically intended to produce harmony and unity.

Education, unchanging values and career similarities from generation to generation have already been advanced as methods of maintaining the status quo. Thus far we have seen this in relation to the family, but the reliance of the saints upon conventional mores mixed with simple practicalities also reflects a conservatism in the general Byzantine outlook. In part, such unity was artificially imposed on men and women alike — but especially upon the latter — by the exclusively male writers drawing on their own experience, in their own interests, for an audience thus deprived of means to reorient its values.

In these observations there is little to distinguish Byzantine society from all others; nevertheless, no harm can be done by stating the obvious where it has not received much previous attention.

2.2 So much for men and women. When considering society in more direct relation to the saint, the main issues raised by this study come more strongly to the fore. In this section, a distinction should be made between a particular saint with his ability to make his presence felt, and the general ethos, religious, political and social, which encompassed every saint and hagiographer.

The theme of "saints and individuals" does not at first sight offer interpretations in terms of unity, but the hagiographers' selection and arrangement of cases in a way that is far from random, however, gives an opening, and their records or manipulation of "dead" and "live" saints are therefore liable to suspicion. Despite the different "flavour" of each source, the multitudinous cases and observations are classifiable with ease.

2.21 Friends were the first category of individuals to be identified. In all cases saints were especially likely to have as friends those with power in the immediate vicinity. Both sides had reasons for this association. The saint could gain wide publicity and recognition, was protected, and, by virtue of his own social background, was likely to be attracted to persons in high positions. The saint was also an attractive patron/protégé for the powerful. Such harmonious personal relations could only be helpful to smooth local government. The exchange of gifts and blessings was a part of these relations and served as good currency in demonstrating the harmony to the populace.

Such friendly relations, particularly for the institutions of church and state, were also a stroke on behalf of political unity within an area. This bias in friendship, however, was never allowed to obscure the claims of other social classes upon the saint. His special responsibility for the poor, downtrodden and those suffering misfortune remained. Saints were not always benign, and occasionally they, or the hagiographer, decided to make an example of a particularly recalcitrant person. A sense of the dramatic as well as hope of frightening the audience into righteousness supplied the author with his motive. Such fierce tactics may have induced Byzantine consciences to seek a way out of the sinful state. To this end, two characters were visited with acute physical afflictions as a result of their impious obstinacy. (These were distinct from the clients seeking medical aid.) Such tactics were patently aimed at achieving overall conformity to righteous behaviour. Hagiography employed another strategy in this cause: the identification of desirable orthodox behaviour and belief with rationality.

Heresies, paganism, traditions of Hippocratic medicine and groups such as the iatrasophists were all identified with the irrational and the road to chaos.

The saints tended, naturally, to emphasise local problems in their selection of cases for more drastic exemplary treatment, in an attempt to produce local conformity to more centralised mores. Constantinople was the most influential source of secular and religious standards of thought and behaviour — although, as seen above, the enlightenment of the capital did not pervade the empire's more far-flung rural corners.

In addition to the traditional aid from saints to the downtrodden, there was a well-tried system of internal social compensation and relief. Imperial and other wealthy philanthropists constituted the main sources of this, but tax-aids formed another important part of the same everyday service. A class of patron-entrepreneur-money-lenders was thus establishing itself in answer to common need. Such a structure may have encouraged parasites, but it also created class cohesion through mutual dependence.

In the cause of political unity at court, Daniel was particularly active. He sheltered more than one official from the wrath of the emperor Leo and in major intrigues such as the usurpation by Basiliscos he had sufficient personal power and immunity to interfere. Using the popular preference for legitimate succession in the imperial house, he turned army and populace against Basiliscos. In this instance, the church was united with the popular cause against the usurper who had oppressed it. Much the same characteristics and divisions are detectable in the relations of saints and institutions. Exceptions to the normal political calm between saints and local authorities were Nikolaos of Myra and Symeon the Younger, and the causes for this in their personality, background and peculiar local circumstances have been discussed. Basil demonstrates the rôle of the hagiographer as synthesist and local propagandist. The convenience of a manipulable cult of a dead saint and martyr aided him in his exposition of the necessity of internal civic unity in the face of wildness and sin outside the walls. Individual instances were used to build up this picture of the hostile outside world, and the contrast was heightened by the organisation of the bureaucracy and the culture and breeding of the Christian and pagan clients.

John the Almsgiver and Theodore of Sykeon, the two saints with official ecclesiastic posts, serve to illustrate another aspect of the relations of saint and establishment, and also one of the main themes of this study, viz., that saints provided an alternative and supplementary, but separate, service to society. John's successful Alexandrian patriarchate was discussed in contrast to Theodore's miserable episcopate, and personalities and circumstances were advanced as an explanation. The Almsgiver positively erupts from his biographer's text as no other saint does, and he was in a position of supreme power where Theodore was relatively powerless. The criteria of "appointment" to the saints' fraternity possibly constituted an additional factor. John achieved his position by outstanding personality, generosity and his fight against traditional abuses and corruption on behalf of the "have-nots", and thus added the accolade of saintliness to his already considerable position through popular recognition of his unique qualities.

The most obvious examples, however, of the saint's rôle in promoting unity of state and church are the interactions of saints with emperors and patriarchs at the heart of events, in Constantinople. The hagiographer is always at pains to represent the interplay to the audience as a personalised formula for smooth progress. "Bad" emperors were inevitably oppressors of t of the church and brought the empire to the brink of unthinkable chaos. The truth of this secular and ecclesiastic partnership is, of course, questionable, but it served its purpose. In times of crisis and friction, the saint pointed the way to a solution—usually with popular backing. For this reason, the saint also had no alternative but to comply when the emperor and patriarch made a public request to him in unison.

With the lower grades of state and ecclesiastic personnel, the variability of relations increased. The most general observation which can safely be made is that the saint represented a completely sound source of advice, leading to harmony and success on a local level when misunderstandings occurred on a personal and a more general scale and the saint had to arbitrate between whole villages as well as individual members of the population. On the secular side, the administrative classes constituted the largest section of the saint's clientele as well as of his friends. Disruptive members of this group did exist, particularly at Myra and Antioch, presenting Nikolaos and Symeon with serious threats to the viability of their ministries. In both cases the saint and hagiographer found it necessary to look for substitute sources of support. Symeon seems to have been able to withstand the opprobrium of the influential by means of taking swift and drastic action against selected opponents, and with the moral and practical support of the imperial official who appeared in the nick of time to add weight to the saint's condemnation of the local populace. Nikolaos' biographer chose a different method. The saint's journey after his confrontation with the local authorities enabled him to enlist a formidable array of "holy" support. The appeal to the seafaring majority of Myra's population was a calculated and presumably successful manoeuvre.

This ploy contravened the normal hagiographic practice of largely ignoring the merchant class—a neglect which may well have been mutual. The remaining social groups, the artisans and the poor, had stronger claims upon the saint and figured in considerable numbers in the sources. The artisans were traditionally, and indeed in the sources, less volatile than the merchant class. Trade was the basis of only a small part of the Byzantine economy, and the merchants may therefore appear so infrequently because of their small numbers.

The urban mob, only a real consideration in the greatest cities, was a further element in the saints' relations with society. The alignment of the saint with the forces of order was here particularly relevant. As seen already, in time of crisis and separation of state, church and saint, the mob was important as a power behind the cause of legitimacy and return from the brink of chaos. In more normal circumstances, the saint could be used as a go-between and monitor on the mood and behaviour of the mob even when emperor and patriarch were in fear of it. A live saint, and especially S. Daniel, was in this instance more helpful to the authorities than a dead one.

Saints were on friendly terms with most professionals who were respectable and orthodox, particularly if they were of good social standing. Doctors were an exception when and where they constituted a serious challenge to divine medicine, as at Aboukir. Sorcerers and other dark powers were seen as professional opposition — and were identified with the irrational. The legal profession and the government bureaucracy on the other hand were on the side of order, as were scholars, who all enjoyed good relations with saints.

In their regard to non-human objects such as property or conventions of behaviour, saints were uniformly conformist. This was strongly practical and was facilitated by close contact with local persons and problems. Some technicalities of the law and of religion must thus have been rendered more understandable and acceptable for the individual. Yet again the saint introduced flexibility on practical lines which helped maintain the status quo. Occasionally the saint was seen committing acts of clemency which were not in line with the narrow concept of law and order or the national interest. Thus they would sometimes ignore laws relating to runaway slaves, could tamper with state prisoners and set aside the demands of family ties.

2.23 In the conduct of their own lives and the activities around their own lives and the activities around their site, this conventional approach, mitigated by close contact with local practicalities, was also a keystone. The reasons for and manner in which saints followed regular monastic lines in their training and in their later affairs have been discussed above (cf. Ch. 4.B). The proclamation of an ideal, however far from the reality, provided a service to society by giving it a visible alternative to its own imperfections. The discipline of obedience, poverty and self-denial had a predictable future, and, however afflicted the mino-community of a saint's establishment might be by corruption, the scale when compared to ordinary society was small. Although it was valuable to "inside" society that such communities should exist, they were not greeted with unalloyed delight by all sections of the local populace. Objections were voiced by opponents who included clerics, professional rivals and others who saw the saint and his group of followers as a potential threat. Where the saint survived, such opposition was publicly overcome, but many saints must have failed to reach the required grade of strength and thus been lost to posterity.

2.24 The evidence available on divine medicine bears out the other observations of the saints' social relations and function. The urban bureaucracy and better-off middle classes feature prominently in the holy surgeries. The pressures upon them and their ability to take countering action were reflected in the types of illness they contracted and in the cures given. Women formed a large section of the clientele — both on their own account and on behalf of their children and husbands. Types of cure as well as of illness fitted the client — which enabled the hagiographer to demonstrate the saint's qualities as a clairvoyant, as a kind benefactor, and as an effective medium of divine mercy. This last point was particularly vital because of the theory attached to the process of cure. Relief from sickness involved penance for whatever sin had caused the illness in the first place and for this reason divine healing was superior to professional medicine. Sophistication

and medical knowledge were more evident both in diagnosis and in treatment of the illnesses in Constantinople and Alexandria, and the more primitive approach was paralleled in more rural areas by the increase of superstition and the mention of demons. The demonic is used in the sources as a label. The incident quoted from the miracles of S. Nikolaos illustrates the belief in an ability to weaken a foe, even when supernatural, by naming him. The use of the demonic as a label for behaviour which was inexplicable or "wrong" in a small community group is far harder to detect, but it is extremely probable. The more urban centres, as well as being less riddled with superstition, preserved more strongly the Asclepian medical tradition. The prominence of traditional and herbal cures and the use of incubation and other Asclepian practices betray the basis of Byzantine divine medicine as once again a mixture of common sense and conformity to traditions - this time pagan ones - where they did not contravene Christian mores.

Before the saint, with his practical insight, could dispense medical and other advice to members of society, tradition demanded not only that he should have some ascetic training in a monastery or similar community, but also that he should have a period in the wilderness, either alone or apprenticed to some other holy figure. The biblical symbolism would not escape any observer, but a deeper principle was involved; the idea of closeness to God was one, illustration of a saint's separateness from society was another. Perhaps this period also gave perspective and the chance to know the scriptures in a better way than by rote.

3. As well as satisfying a cultural convention and providing a psychological preparation, this period in a saint's life pattern aided him to retain separation from the pedestrain world despite his practical involvement. As an individual it put the saint almost in the class of a traditional hero with charisma and infinite resourcefulness. It also endowed the saintly presence and his cult-site with an utopian atmosphere sufficient to withstand the taint of its own imperfections.

3.2 Both the heroic tradition and saints' institutional powers were important to Byzantine society, which balanced on a mixture of optimism, guilt and veneration of their own cultural heritage. Such belief or confidence prompted hope for a present and a future golden age using the values of the past unreformed.

The interconnection of concepts of utopia and the heroic has been insufficiently considered in this context and merits further study, but already they aid understanding of the saint as an outsider and alternative while still being integral to Byzantine society.

Much of the material supporting this point is contained in the language of hagiography. (cf. sect. 3.4). But the importance of these beliefs was their contribution to the maintenance of unity with certain traditions. The saint thus was a positive factor in political, social and religious harmony a consciousness of continuity with the past. His effect upon society, despite his air of being "apart" from it, was anything but an innovatory force.

3.3 The most consistent aid to organisation throughout this study has been the separation of the city groups. It is time to examine the results and implications of this. From the testimony of all the sources, Constantinople and Alexandria were cities in a class of their own. They offered more variety, sophistication and opportunity in careers and amenities. Constantinople in particular found reflection for its international position in its cosmopolitan atmosphere and enlightenment and in the attitudes expressed by its writers. The sources available for Constantinople span a consider ble period and reveal details of changing class structures and social attitudes which are most illuminating though not within the direct scope of the present study. The degrees of co-operation between state, church and saint and the relations of these to the rest of the city population has already been amply discussed, as has the class distribution of the saints and their clients per se. But related to this is evidence which concerns the changing class barriers of which the clearest indication is found in the later series of the miracles of Cosmas and Damian. The hagiographer was not only far more concerned with the rank of his subjects and their proximity to the emperor but was patently shocked when poor and low class clients were given precedence or were instrumental in the cures of "those who would normally employ them." The political and social framework seems to have been both more settled and more rigid at this date than in S. Daniel's day. At both Constantinople and Alexandria, the conformity of the artisan and professional classes and their frequent recourse to both the medical and other saints are noticeable. Alexandria differs from Constantinople by appearing less as an administrative centre and with proportionally more emphasis on commerce. Aboukir is somewhat limited in class structure, but does reveal the anxious energy expended upon retaining a healthy body and soul - by those able to afford the luxury.

The place of Antioch in the first group is less clear. Although we lack breadth and chronological variety in the available sources, it is still fair to draw attention to the differences indicated by the life of Symeon the Younger. These, naturally, only hold good for the period surrounding the writing of his life. The different characteristics are noticeable in several spheres: firstly, Symeon's relations with the local δυνατοὶ showed none of the relaxed give and-take realpolitik which was in evidence elsewhere. The hagiographer treated the personnel of authority differently. The absence of bishops and of a well-defined bureaucracy was the most obvious example. The great wealth of civic amenities found in Constantinople and Alexandria were here conspicuous by their absence, despite the tag of "great metropolis" attached to the city and some evidence of civic building projects. The distance from Antioch to the capital is very noticeable in a way quite untrue of Alexandria, where commerce and its regulation, and the power of the centralised government, were much more in evidence. The imperial official who visited Antioch was in harmony with the saint but not with the city's influenctial citizens. He was, moreover, an imperial trouble-shooter lately returned from defeating Samaritan heretical rebels. Antioch was, in other words, being treated by Constantinople as a provincial city in need of urgent corrective measures.

There were also petty power struggles and tensions within the saint's sphere of activities. This has been interpreted in the above chapters as strain between urban and rural demands and responsibilities. This phenomenon was also

identified in the larger towns of the second group. At Myra it was translated into sharp conflict of interests in time of crisis. The parasitic qualities of the city which drained the surrounding hinterland and rendered it dependent upon the city in times of trouble was neither new nor unrecognised. An additional irritant were the προτικτῶρης whose depredations and abuses were plainly revealed by the hagiographers. The presence of this imposed administration with centralised responsibilities without regard to the local authorities which had evolved more naturally and which were in existence, can have done little to make amends. These problems as well as the proximity of enemy forces afflicted Antioch. Because of its size it cannot be dismissed to the second group out of hand, but the evidence of hagiography supports the view that in life-style Antioch was closer to them.

The evidence from Sykeon gives us coverage of the last part of the period. In many ways it only repeats and extends the observations made for Antioch. The methods of rural regional government had the same in-built problems. Sykeon was not, however, a sufficiently hungry or influential conurbation to produce the amount of strain evident at Antioch or Myra. In one matter, Sykeon differed radically from Antioch; high-ranking personnel were superabundant and mostly friendly to the saint. This proliferation caused weakness of each bishopric and may have resulted from deliberate central policy. The impression given is of a region covered in small-city bishoprics, each with a fringe or rural, village-dotted hinterland. Major struggles for political or religious supremacy seem to have been in the background.

The exact opposite was true of Seleuceia, which makes S. Thecla's miracles a valuable contrast both in content and in their coverage of the very beginning of the period. The conscious and competitive civic pride in the administration and its personnel, in the standard of learning and in commercial and political dominance may be an idosyncrasy of Basil's writing, but is still symptomatic of a different outlook from that expressed in the later sources. Nowhere were the opposing forces of order inside and chaos outside made more explicit. (These alternatives are clearly depicted in later texts which varied much in detail but little in their central theme).

3.4 Such a stark contrast between the inside and the outside of cities was one rather crude form of symbolism. The texts are riddled with motifs and phrases used with cunning and precision by the hagiographers for emotive effect upon the audience. Echoes of biblical and other mythologies enliven the narrative and give the audience something familiar to identify and around which to shape the remainder of the saga. This and the process of "individualisation" discussed earlier show hagiography directed at an audience of various literary levels, including the fairly basic. Anticipated audience responses varied from appreciation to action prompted by polemics and skilful rhetoric.

The Byzantine heritage included many key words and images, of which that of the time in the wilderness has been mentioned already. During this testing period the saint was likely to meet opposition from assorted wild beasts. To overcome these by strength of his personality and of his close contact with the Almighty was an essential proof of his fitness for the tasks ahead. The choice of a mountainous (or in some cases desert) site was another frequent motif.

For Symeon and Nikolaos this isolation from civilisation was inextricably bound up with the concept of their own more perfect communities. For Nikolaos and Daniel this was expressed as "the second Jerusalem" and was compared to the "ship of state." The difficulties of the training period may have encouraged the use of the epithet ἀθλητὴς τοῦ Θεοῦ to signify the saint's successful experience of one-ness with his God, as distinct from the superficial knowledge of his teaching beforehand. Biblical parallels make various miracles more memorable, for example, the feeding of the crowd with fishes and loaves by Nikolaos. The use of numbers, particularly the number three, has been mentioned previously. (cf. Ch. 5 sect. 3.13). Other symbols can be found in the sources and raise interesting points, but space prevents the further investigation here which the subject merits. Symbolism and terminology are not always easily separable. The use of the demonic, for instance, can be seen both ways. Faced with a harsh external environment, such labels provided a way of seeing the conflict of good and evil (which was apparent) without actually subscribing to an heretical doctrine.

3.5 The last section of this review is reserved for the hagiographer who held at his mercy both contemporary and modern audiences. How are we to interpret the hagiographer? Was he a calculating villain of the piece? A willing or innocent tool of the authorities? Or merely a response to his political, social and religious environment? Even the most extreme of these views allows for individual differences and varying circumstances, and leaves room for degrees of connivance. A hagiographer could not fail to respond to his environment and to the charismatic qualities of each subject. On the other hand, it is an inadequate explanation to relegate the saints and their biographers to the rank of a mere response to local needs and dissatisfactions. The relationship of saint and hagiographer and of city and cult-site was good material for exploitation by the writer in his own or his city's favour. Basil's own position and stature, personal and official, were greatly strengthened by his own peculiar relation to the saint, her legend, her site and its personnel.

In other ways too the hagiographer was a synthesist. The assimilation of pagan myths, values and traditions such as the reliance on prophets and oracles, has already been mentioned, and the similarity of classical and the Byzantines' "virtues" are but one demonstration of the continuity produced. The saints were living reminders of a golden age of heroes and of God's mercy which could bring such an era to future reality. The lack of strictly indigenous mythology resulted in a high tolerance for and adoption of the heritage of others. The civic ideal was one example of this; another, more trivial but revealing, was the compulsion of Cyrus and John's biographer to trace the lineage of an epileptic patient back to Ptolemy, Cleopatra and Osiris.

4. The great amount of evidence which has been used in this study only partially answers the hypotheses put forward and the questions raised. Maybe they are only partly answerable, but there are openings for further work. A wider sample of sources of different locations and times is needed and may help to establish or demolish the ideas put forward on the basis of the present state of research. Thus far this has shown the history of society and of the saint in and around the sixth century to be interwoven on various levels. In each case the saint was found deeply involved in local politicas and ecclesiastic

and social affairs. His activites in these matters were selected, arranged and used by the hagiographer in a way that was both practical and purposeful. Certain differences were evident when comparing earlier and later sources from greater and smaller urban centres.

Where might wider study lead? To extend the period is to consider the decline of the urban saint and the controversial matter of cities in and after the seventh century. Might there be a connection? We have, after all, considered the connections of saint and city in the period of their successful survival. Icons were mentioned occasionally in hagiography and were obviously more easily controllable than saints with their charisma, their followers and their tendency to be obstinate. More general production and possession of icons could have rendered the saints unnecessary, even undesirable, for both the authorities and the individual. Late saints were attached to monastic communities and were instrumental in their political struggles and land feuds, but little evidence exists of "live" urban saints of the type and stature seen in the present study. More manageable "dead" saints and those with specific purpose such as the healing saints persisted. Their conflict with the medical profession had almost disappeared. (cf. Ch. 5). The possible connections of success and decline for city and saint is consistent with the hypothesis of alternatives which has been exhaustively presented.

The evidence which is available and which has been used for the time and area under consideration supports, I believe, the ideas postulated here. This is not to deny the saint ascetic fervour or "holiness" but it does warrant a new approach to early Byzantine saints in urban contexts which cannot be isolated from reflections upon the society in which they existed.

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